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This Book

BELONGS TO

Ann Dean

Feb'y 10th 1826

If thou art borrow'd by a friend,
Right welcome shall he be,
To read, to study, not to lend,
But to return to me.

Not that imparted knowledge doth
Diminish learning's store,
But books, I find, if often lent,
Return to me no more.

Keep cleanly, return duly,
with the corners of the leaves not
turned down.

H. M. Whiting

18 MAY 1966

GLEANINGS OF THE VINTAGE;

OR

LETTERS

TO THE SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST;

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE.

PART VI.

There shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. Isa. xxiv. 13.

The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it. Isa. lxv. 8.

LONDON:

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1813.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

CHRISTIAN READER,

IN preparing the fifth part of this work for the press, my attention was arrested by a particular passage in the thirty-first letter, and on the ninety-fifth page, the words are these, 'Nevertheless the time will come when Christ will say, what I will not say, namely, that they shall know that there hath been a prophet among them!' This letter was penned in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, and it struck me as being remarkable because of its coincidence with what forms a striking feature in his epitaph, 'For England and its metropolis shall know that there hath been a prophet among them!' I advert to this merely to shew that it was no hasty conclusion of my father's mind, but that he expressed the same opinion in confidence, eighteen years before his decease.

The first letters of this part are of a very early date, written during his abode at Thames Ditton, and were addressed to Samuel, the husband of Ann Webb, whose name is recorded in the Bank of Faith; she is still living, and feels a pleasure in surrendering them up for a short period, for thy use and benefit.

E. HUNTINGTON.

High Street,
Nov. 9, 1813.

LETTERS

WRITTEN BY THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To Mr. S. W.

Ditton, Dec. 17th, 1776.

My Dear Friends in the Lord Jesus,

THIS comes with my sincere love to your souls, and indeed I write to you in the bonds of the strongest love, namely, that love that is stronger than death; O Lord, may it ever reign in all our hearts, world without end! even so O Lord, Amen. When I think of the happy opportunities we have had together in holy conversation, and how amazingly the Almighty has sealed his truth, and the love of it upon our hearts, when we have assembled together; O what a strong mark of God's being in the work when it is so blest, knowing God never sets his seal to a lie, but to the truth.

But now my dear Samuel and Phebe, these opportunities will never again perhaps be put in our hands, yet God can change them for better;

and as we cannot now reach each other's ears with our voices, may the Lord enable us to reach each other's minds with our pens. I shall, if God enable me, sometimes write to you, and should be glad to hear from you, and to know your affairs, and whether ye stand fast in the liberty of the gospel. Beware my dear souls of the world, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage; and be not of that number that, God says, draw back to perdition, but of them that press forward in faith, to the saving of the soul.

My dear friends, beware of christless talkers, for they are the bane of the church; a man may have all the truths of the gospel in his head, but that will not do, because the scriptures say, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," i. Cor. iv. 20. A man may have a gift of prayer and be a hypocrite, but God's children have the spirit of prayer as well as the gift. A child of God may cry to Christ, when he cannot speak, a hypocrite may speak when he cannot cry; view these things, and the Lord give thee understanding. A hypocrite may cry to God in trouble, but at the same time his heart never taken from the world, such cries God will not hear, because the world has their hearts, Hos. vii. 14; Micah iii. 4. But to the poor in spirit, and to the meek-hearted, God says he will up, because of their deep sighings, and deliver them from the hands of him that is stronger than they.

But say you, our souls have got many enemies; yes, I know it, and there is but one friend; I know the world, the flesh, and the devil are your enemies, and I am glad of it, for woe to your souls if you are at friendship with either of these three. We are to declare war with all Christ's enemies, and when you are nothing but perfect weakness in yourself, then you will beat every enemy you fight with, Joel iii. 10; but when you are strong in the flesh, you are sure to be beat, Ezek. xxxiv. 16. As for your enemies, Christ conquered them all for us, and when we come to Christ in trouble, then he imputes to us the victory, then all our enemies must hide their heads in a moment; and as for the devil, faith minds him not, faith knows he is nothing but a fallen rebellious angel, that lays under the most high God's everlasting curse, which holds him as a chain in utter darkness; and faith's work is to look to Jesus that destroyed principalities and powers. But say you there is sin; yes, but faith well knows that her object and author, has condemned sin in the flesh, and if sin is condemned and the sinner justified, then says faith, What God condemned in my flesh, shall not condemn my soul that God hath justified; therefore says faith, I must look to him that was manifest in the flesh, to destroy the works of the devil.

But say you, the world hems me in, and I am afraid that will draw me from Christ; I am glad

you are afraid of it, for God says, he that is a friend of the world is an enemy of God, therefore faith looks to him that says "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. Well say you, but my own wicked, corrupted, deceitful heart, is my worst enemy; yes, but says faith, God's word declares, he that trusts his own heart is a fool, a natural man, and not a saint, for faith says, My work is to look at my other object that prepares the heart; and I, says faith, am the instrument he uses to purify the heart, for I know, says faith, your heart and your flesh will fail, but if yourself will let me alone, I shall point out him to you that is the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever. Well, say you, but if they cannot destroy me, they destroy my comforts, and drive me from the sensible presence of God, into many misty clouds of ignorance, stupidity, and insensibility, and into many dark days of desertion; darkness covers my mind, so that I grope like one blind, quite without an evidence: this is bad to be in, but, says faith, I must believe the promise, and look to the word of God, Ezek. xxxiv. 12.

A good man once said, that God when he converted a sinner, laid his Spirit in pawn to that soul, so the Spirit is the soul's earnest of its inheritance, and so when we die, Christ receives his own with usury. So, my dear souls, let your troubles be what they may, obey God's voice,

God says, "Give me thy heart;" let the blessed Jesus have it, for you can do nothing in mending of it, and he says, Commit the keeping of your souls into his hands; pray let him have it, and he will keep your's, as well as Paul's, till that day. He likewise says, Offer up your bodies, which is your reasonable service, pray, my dear souls, let him have them; and he likewise says, "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." Obey his voice for he gave himself for us; give we ourselves to him, and then says faith, "You are not your own, you are bought with a price," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; then let what enemies will come against me, says faith, the battle is not mine but God's; and we must turn the battle to the gate, says David, and that gate is Christ.

So then when enemies come to us, say we as the three children did to the king in Babylon, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," Dan. iii. 16; for, says the soul, I cannot answer any enemies, therefore I have committed all my affairs into the wonderful Counsellor's hands, to plead for me. So the soul that is married to Christ, says to all enemies if they demand any thing, Go to my heavenly husband, he pays all for me, he paid law and justice too for me; and as all fulness dwells in him, there is enough to pay all demands: and if you have peace with God through Christ, then let faith produce his receipt

to any enemy that asks after it, which is this, He that believes is justified freely from all things, that is your receipt, mark it; when ye thus live, then you live indeed.

Would you know, whether you have got Christ's righteousness on you? depend on it you have if you have got rid of all your own, for whom Christ strips he clothes, Zech. iii. 4; Christ puts no new cloth upon our old garments, lest the rent is made worse. I have much more to say but no more time. Pray give my love to C. and Mr. and Mrs. G. and tell them to take hold, and keep hold of Christ; stretch forth the withered hand, and pray the Lord to lift it up, according to his promise, Micah v. 9. My wife joins in love to you, and I conclude, an enemy to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Christ be with you, Amen.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

I cannot conclude here, now I must go on and make a double letter of it. Would you know whether you have got Christ, and the truth in your heart, and mercy from God through him? depend upon it you have, if conscience condemns thee not. Would you know whether you are made wise to salvation, and your wisdom all from the blessed Jesus, the great prophet? why, God says, he will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and if you are sure you are a fool of yourself,

and have not wisdom in your own eyes, Prov. iii. 7, then be sure your wisdom is in Christ laid up, Prov. ii. 6. Would you know whether you have got saving faith in the blood of Christ? why, if you can discern unbelief to be the damning sin of the whole world, and feel it so to be, this is the Spirit's work in the heart, John xvi. 9.

Where God discovers unbelief, he gives faith, all the time unbelief is hid from our eyes, we cannot have faith, and therefore all that is not of faith is sin; but if you can persuade yourself from what you have felt, and what you have seen in the word, and what you have heard preached, that Jesus is your's, then if you have been enabled to believe, the fruit of faith is peace, Rom. v. 1. Hold him fast in the promises, and that will not fail. Bring what you feel and the word together, and that will stand fast, Isai. viii. 20. Would you know how God causes his people to hear his voice, and how God instructs his people? it is by temptation, and by deliverance from it; by persecution, and by the stirring of corruption, and by doubts and fears, and deliverance from them. By sharp convictions going before, and comforts coming after, by our blindness and knowledge, followed by the light of God's Spirit; by uncomfortable and comfortable frames, by sharp soul sorrow and heavenly joy.

Would you know whether God loves you? he

does if he scourges you well, Prov. iii. 11, 12; his chastenings are our instructions, mind what every stripe utters, listen to its voice, Micah vi. 9. Depend on it God loves you, if you on account of sin hate yourself; Christ says, He that hates his life in this world, shall keep it to life eternal. Would you know whether you grow in grace, and knowledge, and love, and how you grow? I answer, by being condemned by the law, and by being justified by Christ's gospel; by being wounded in your spirit, and having it bound up by the Spirit of God; by being often in trouble, and helped out by Christ through the prayer of faith; by being honoured before sinners, and sometimes dishonoured before saints, to humble pride; by being lashed by conscience, and comforted by God; by being conquered by sin, and delivered by Christ. Thus we are taught by darkness and by light, by desertion and consolation, by deadness and liveliness, by insensible and sensible feelings, and by faith and unbelief. Now may the almighty Jesus bless this, and all your souls, is the desire of a miserable, poor wretch, and make you truly poor in spirit, continual beggars at a throne of grace, destitute of all help but Christ, and never any stock in your own hands, but all in Jesus, Amen. Love to all saints.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

Ditton.

My dear Brother and Sister,

I HOPE in the Lord, and dearly beloved of me, and longed for in the spirit of meekness, this comes with the strongest love to your souls. I write to you, because I must be at Kingston on Thursday, about that unhappy affair, therefore you cannot expect me at Ewell. O my dear souls, I think I every day see our awful calamities coming on, shocking divisions are in the country, our day is far spent.

I charge you all in the presence of God, to try yourselves by scripture and prayer, whether you be in the faith. Soon, my dear souls, must we all appear before the awful tribunal of God, where there will be no feeing the judge, nor bribing the jury, I mean the twelve apostles, that will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Then all hypocrites will be uncased, and the king and the beggar stand both on a level, and only the poor in spirit receive the kingdom of God; of which happy number may you be, shall be the prayer of the vilest sinner, and feeblest saint, William Huntington.

Our friends at Woking give their kind love to you; God seemed to follow the word with power, some crying under great concern of soul; they lay near my heart, O pray that they may lay in the bosom of Christ. I pray you, withdraw from all that walk unholy, and let the world hang loose on your back, and follow hard after that spirit of love and meekness in which I found you the last time I was with you; all pride, and lightness of spirit, is hid from your eyes in that frame. Beware of vain talk and vain people, watch against the devil, and watch God's hand in answering prayer.

Now, O God, I commit this into thy hand, and their dear souls, praying thee to bless them, and own this to their good, Amen. Tell M. to beware of sin, for if she wilfully sins again, there is no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, as the scripture says. May God keep you all, Amen. We all join in love to your souls, Amen.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

Ditton.

Dear Friends,

I CONFESS my fault in not sending to you before, but believe me I have but little time. Last Sunday was a week, I went to London and preached, and the Lord was with us indeed, though strangers to each other before. I found soon we were fellow-citizens; the Lord gave me great power in prayer and preaching, and we parted in the language of a friend of old, "It is good for us to be here." From thence I went to Camberwell, and found my dear sister alive to God, and I went to hear Mr. B. in the evening, and had such a time, that I wished to die before I got out of the church. O Lord, ever give me this bread. I parted with her, between twelve and one o'clock, with some of the old prophetic love in our hearts; O heavenly wind, blow it into a flame. Between four and five in the morning I reached home; I do really believe this is better than sleeping.

Last Saturday I was dreadfully tried, by an old enemy that I had been preaching against a night or two before, tried till my soul groaned.

I told a friend that I would at him again when I got out; it is he that our mother overcome by the blood of the Lamb: O God give power. On Sunday morning I went to Moulsey in chains, but found freedom of speech, though no love on my heart; but it was a blessing to them that were bound, God will not let me work for nothing.

From thence I went to Woking alone, not quite alone, for my foe was near at hand, which made me look up and cry heartily to God; yet I was big with expectation of feeling some of the fire of God's love, after this fire of confusion, and going over Seend Marsh, a man that comes to hear me told me that one Captain B. and his wife, and some more people, wanted to hear me preach. I told them if they got together against I came back, I would preach to them. Well, thought I, this will pay for my temptation.

When I came to my dear flock they gladly received me, and the room was full; I found it well between God and my soul alone, and went out to speak, and there were some stood without doors, the room would not hold them. I spake from these words, "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" and God blessed it. Then I retired to get a text for them without, and the bible was shut up from me; O how was I tried, I prayed and cried to God, and I said, there was the greatest multitude I ever spoke to. At last I went trembling out with these words, "But

they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium," Acts xiii. 51; still in chains, and my dear brother H. pitying me with tears. This concourse of people came from all quarters, a great many hundreds; as soon as I took my text, down dropped my chains, and I never felt out of doors such boldness and power, and all so quiet, so awed, and such power. After sermon they thronged round the door, I exhorted them till my soul wept, and some that I never saw before wept with me; nigh a hundred of them stood round me, and God was powerful with us. They kept me till dark, many wanted to go to Seend with me, so I left them like little children.

When I came to Seend, there were a few people waiting, there had been both foot and horse, but many were gone; they asked me to preach, and they called the Captain out; there was still some foot and some horse. So I went into a house, and picked out a text, and then went out and preached in the dark, all stood still, and I hope God was with us, so I got home about twelve o'clock. On Monday night I preached at Twickenham, after being three times asked, and God was there; some wanted to hear because of the evil report raised about me, and God met them, and sent them away with a very good opinion of me.

On Tuesday evening I preached at Richmond,

some thronged to hear because I had been called a wolf in sheep's clothing, but God was with me; some were greatly cut, others that came to hear the wolf, said, I was well taught of God. This night I preached at Ditton, with as great liberty as ever, God was with us, and some of my dear friends from Kingston, who have strongly opposed me, came to hear out of curiosity; but God sent them home with these words in their mouth, It is worth coming for. My dear friends that gave it out that I was a wolf come to scatter the flock, have since altered their minds, and said that I was a child of God, but no preacher, though they never heard me before. The next words I suppose will be, that I am a preacher but no bishop; Lord, what is man!

A gentleman from London who was at Woking told me, that he thought I was to blame to go to Richmond, and to blame to preach out of doors, because I had no learning; this was a month ago last Sunday; many quality came with him from Guildford, so he distressed my soul greatly. But I went away and poured out my soul, complaint and all, before God alone, till my heart was broke, and then I went out to preach, and I think one of the clearest discourses I ever delivered, and with great power. Then the gentleman called me aside, and offered me money to bear my expences, which I refused; he told me, he wished he could give me twenty pounds; he

said I was called of God, and told me never to work journey-work under any proprietors, but to go on as I did, and I am determined to have no master but Christ. So I see from this gentleman, that if I consulted man I should neither preach nor hold my tongue; God make me a preacher, not of man nor by man.

A minister was sent down from London to preach, and to expose me in the pulpit; he said he knew I preached errors, but never heard me. He said he knew I did not live according to the gospel, but never saw me; he said I had left off work, God forgive his lies; he said I preached for money, but I could stand search any time I believe. If any man would give me a thousand pounds, I could not leave off preaching, God holds me with a strong hand. The proprietors threaten laying me in prison, because I am not licensed; after this many people came to hear me at Richmond with keen ears, to hear what a monster of sin I was. I earnestly begged of God in my prayer publicly, that God would shew them whether I was right or wrong in coming, if wrong that he would confound me, if right that power might be felt; and God was with me with a witness, and convinced them all. I must conclude, it is midnight. Pray give my love to all friends. I wish you my dear friends the peace of heaven, and more communication with my dear, dear Redeemer, Amen.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Friends,

WHEN may a child of God lay down? When he can get no higher in his spiritual mind; when no lower in humility; when no further in gospel experience; when there is nothing more new in the bible; when he seeks Jesus in vain; and when he is the invisible image of Christ in full stature.

I tell you when I intend to leave off prayer. When corruption is entirely destroyed; when my heart can no longer deceive; when I have done kicking at the cross, and never a cross to take up; when the world no more deceives my eyes; and when the devil is ashamed to shew me his face.

Two ways I deceive myself, and two ways I am deceived. When I, to encourage pride, want to appear more gracious than I am; and when through fear I hide that grace I really have; when I thought I had strength for a great trial, and sunk at a small one; and when I sunk at the thoughts of a great cross, and when it came carried it boldly: one is strength in weakness, the other is weakness in strength.

I am always in fear. When comfort is gone I fear it will come no more; when I have got it I

fear being robbed; when I am in trouble I am not easy; and when I walk long easy I am in trouble.

Two things I should like to pray for. To be saved from my good works, and to have the sins forgiven of my godly sorrow.

Two things I desire to see, which would strike me dead. To see myself as I really am in God's sight, as a sinner; and to see Christ as he is in glory, and that is the best sight of all; terror always hardens my heart, and to taste Christ's love coming out of a trial, breaks it all to pieces.

One way I commonly get a blessing at Meeting. When the preacher has nothing of his own; when it comes hot from the Lord, given in as it is dealt out, and then it is wet; a discourse laid up in the head is mostly dry.

My dear C. and Mr. and Mrs. G. and all my poor dear souls, I wish you all the blessed Jesus; all is heaven with him, all is hell and damnation without him. O my dear, dear Lord, and God, and Saviour, Jesus, be thou my portion for ever, Amen.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

P. S. Pray let me hear from you. Pray lisp out something of heart-work, that I may guess whether it is Jesus speaks or not. The devil tells me I shall be praised, for this disappoint him, and praise God. I do not like he should please me, I do not like to please him.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

Ditton.

My dear Brother and Sister,

THIS comes with my love to you and all friends, hoping your souls prosper, and am sorry I could not come to you; I did set out to come, but it was so dark and late that I went back again, but my heart was in a measure with you. O how did the devil work me because I could not come, but I know we should meet oftener together, if you prayed for it more; all things are possible to them that pray in faith, for God says, he will be enquired of, that he may do these things for us, and blessed be his name, it is right we should.

O my dear brother and sister, tell God of every trouble you meet with as soon as it comes, for when you try to help yourselves, you fall into a bad temper, and grieve the Spirit of holiness, and satan leads you into darkness. I thought to-night he would work you, and tell you we should meet no more, but do not believe the father of lies; as soon as you find he works on you and makes you cross, go directly and tell God of it, and the Lord will soon bruise his head, for God tells us to cast our cares on him. The devil loves to see

our souls bowed down with our own cares. O thou enemy of all truth, we defy thee in the strength of Jesus, and through Christ we hope we shall rejoice in heaven, when you will burn world without end: O Lord, deliver us from him because he tempts us.

I have had a letter from Mr. H. he gives his love to you both, it is something of the language of Canaan. O my dear souls, keep close to Jesus, and let that be your chiefest work. Follow, my dear friends, that weeping spirit of meekness, that is the frame we walk safe in, and beware of a light spirit, and a light conversation; keep from sinners, and keep humble, and may the Lord bless you. My soul shall weep for you all: remember me to all friends. My wife gives her love; the Lord bless thee, Amen.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER VI.

TO MRS. W.

Thames Ditton.

My dear Daughter in Christ,

I TRUST, by the Lord thou art highly favoured, blessed art thou among women. It is true, my daughter, thou hast lost a good and a

great earthly comfort, but let not thy precious soul be bowed down on that account, for my dear master will surely do the kinsman's part for thee, and be a nourisher of thy soul in thy widowhood state. Thy old father Mordecai, hath not forgot thee, but will surely sit at the king's gate, begging in sackcloth for thee, till he knows how it will go with poor Esther. Pray, my daughter, let me know how thy poor soul fares; send me a letter, send me spiritual savoury meat in it, such as thy father's soul loveth, and let it come in a lordly dish; and I will now and then send thee a spiritual bracelet, and sometimes a signet, and sometimes a staff.

Put off thy widowhood garments from thee, and call thyself Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee. Surely I will do, in Christ Jesus, the duty of a father and a husband to thee, and if the Lord blesses my letter to thee, thou must call my name Asher, and say, he yieldeth royal dainties. I will if thou desire it, speak to the king for thee, or the captain of the host, and when thou art permitted to touch the sceptre, thou must remember Mordecai; and if I find by thy letter thou art happy in soul, I will say it is enough, my child is yet alive. What? dost thou say bless me, even me, O my father? I have blessed thee, and will pray that thy cruse may not fail, nor the meal waste.

Where art thou my daughter? in the tent laughing through unbelief, saying, shall I have a son

that am old? O my daughter, thou hast borne seven, thou hast a holy child in the womb of hope, and at death thou wilt see him, and laugh so, that all that hear will laugh with thee. Fear not, my daughter, thy father will give thee a good south land, and the upper and nether springs, and thy name shall be Anna, thou shalt speak of him to those that look for redemption in Israel.

Pray give my kind love to Mr. and Mrs. L. and Mrs. F. and be sure to get the room ready on the wall, and set the table in order, and the stool, and the chair, and get a candlestick ready, for I am going to Carmel next Monday, it is new moon. Fare thee well, my daughter, a full reward be given thee of the Lord, under whose wings thou art forced to trust. Let me have joy of thee, my daughter; be thou a spiritual comfort to Paul the aged.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER VII.

TO MRS. ——.

Thames Ditton.

To my dear Phebe, greeting,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with her, from him which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. I received thy epistle yesterday, and was glad to hear that my poor blind child was

alive,. with her tottering faith. And now Phebe is desirous of knowing what the Lord hath done for me, listen to a parable, my daughter, and I will open my dark sayings on the harp; To thee it is given to know the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. Why, then Jesus is so immense that the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, and yet my heart holds him; he is incomprehensible, and yet I know him; invisible, and yet I see him; immortal, yet dwells with mortal man; eternal, and yet born in time. Now if thou dost not plow with Christ's heifer, thou wilt not find out the riddle, and poor Phebe said it was manna, for she wist not what to call it. See then that thou lay up a little of this hidden manna in thy golden pot, for thou wilt want it in the great day.

I think by thy letter, thou art not grown at all, thou art little of stature, I wish thou wouldest get up into the tree of life; surely thou art ricketty, or else they do not nurse and feed this poor blind child. Thy hands seem very weak, and thy knees feeble, I advise thee to bathe in Ezekiel's holy waters, and do not be afraid; paddle in them up to thy very heart, and drink a little new wine of the kingdom, for thy stomach's sake, and thy often infirmities; and take a little of the oil of joy to anoint thee, for thou knowest not how soon thou mayest be called to stand before the king. Let no filthiness appear in thy skirts, go

in peace, and be whole of the plague of thy unbelief. If I had thee here, I should search thy tent very narrowly, I should examine thy stuff to see if thou hast got an image instead of Christ. Take Christ, and eat him up, for he only creates an appetite.

But you want to know how I go on, why faith, hope, love, and godly zeal, are with me still, and they are very profitable to me for the ministry, but patience I have left at Miletum sick. The old man is with me still, and in a thriving condition; by all that I can do I cannot keep him lame in both his feet, I am obliged to dwell with him that hates peace; but blessed be God I have great success in my labours, and preach more than ever, but am weak in body. You want to know how my wife does, she is with me still in the tent, and a flying in my face every now and then as usual; she is very fond of Hagar, and determined not to part with Moses if she can help it, and he is a cruel husband to her soul; there will be a divorce soon I believe, for he has almost killed her.

Little Ebenezer is well, but cannot walk, and there is another just at hand will tread upon his heels; old Leah has, and will have a good dowry, she is neither barren nor unfruitful. We are all well here at present, and I wish thee better in soul, lay by thy leading strings, and lean on Christ by faith more Betty, mind what I say,

lean on the Lord as thy staff. I suppose I shall receive an answer within a year, for she is idle, she is idle; fare thee well, the God of peace be with thee; I believe I shall see thee by and by. My Dame joins in love to you, in Christ,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

BOTH your epistles, Betty, came to hand, but the first in which you ordered me how and where to direct to you, is mislaid, so that I am constrained to direct this to brother G. who I doubt not will help it to you. Your first convinced me of the truth of what I always thought, that when you left me you went from God, however the elect of God cannot be lost, for they are appointed to obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Hence the Saviour says, "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John vi. 37.

We may procure many rods and stripes, crosses and burdens, to our own souls, which may cause us to go halting to the grave, but nothing shall ever alter the eternal purpose of God, nor prevent

his most holy Spirit, and his eternal love from finding them out. I am a living witness of this, for though I never sought him, yet he sought me; I never called upon his name in truth, yet he called upon mine; and though out of the way of the means, his means made a way to me: "I am found," saith he, "of them that sought me not." "I know my sheep, and they hear my voice; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands." "I lay down my life for my sheep, and I give unto them eternal life;" and these, Betty, are the true sayings of God.

I was glad to hear by your last, that you found some encouragement under the word, when in town; I was afraid that your appetite had been so vitiated, feeding so long upon husks, that the provisions of Wisdom's table, and the true bread, would hardly go down; though when the same mighty famine falls on us, as did on the poor prodigal, nothing but the bread of life will suffice; and my soul blesses God for making such provision, and for inviting them to it who are ready to perish. What a hearty welcome do poor sinners meet with, when they bring a craving appetite with them; "Eat O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved;" so true is the word of his grace, that he filleth the hungry with good things, but he sendeth the rich in themselves, empty away, Luke i. 53.

The elder sons by creation, who are in their

first-born state, in the flesh and not born again, frankly own that our heavenly Father never gave them a kid, to make merry with their friends; but those who are predestinated to the adoption of sons, these poor prodigals when they return, obtain the ring of eternal love, the robe of imputed righteousness, and the fatted calf; and though the elder sons are offended with this, yet God will have it so, and there is no resisting his will. Betty, cleave close to Jesus, delight thy soul in him, and make up all thy happiness in him, for all besides is death. Be a good girl, and mind your books, I mean, scripture and conscience, keep there, for out of them are the issues of life.

Ever your's,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER IX.

TO MR. A.

I WAS glad to hear from thee, my son, but am much engaged with a book in hand, which by visitors I have been much hindered in writing. You must not judge of your success by your different frames, the treasure is lodged in an earthen vessel, that the excellency of the power

may be of God and not of us. He often displays his power, when we are most weak, and his wisdom in and by the most simple means and words, that men may learn to distinguish between the instrument and the hand that uses it. Paul's bodily presence was contemptible, said his enemies, and his speech weak; but his letters were weighty and powerful, and so were his words. Paul's words were seasoned with grace; the more he cleaved to Christ, the more he savoured of him; and the more savoury he was, the more unctuous was the flock. "All his garments smell of myrrh," which is sweet, "and of aloes," which is bitter. Ezekiel's roll, and John's little book were bitter sweets; the sweeter the Lord's presence is, the more bitter his absence; and the more fruitful we are, the more purging will the branch need. Give yourself much to study and reading, and when this becomes our delight, the work will be the more pleasant.

I am very well satisfied with the report that I hear of thee. Purifying faith, truth in the love of it, and a good conscience, will carry a man with peace and fortitude, through this vain world. Farewell, grace, mercy, and peace, be with thee, and with all them that love our Lord Jesus.

Ever your's in him,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Son and Fellow-labourer,

GRACE and peace be with thee, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Souls young in faith, and under the powerful constraints of love, are always forward to lengthen Zion's cords, and to strengthen her stakes; and while the promises flow in, and consolations abound, they are for pouring this treasure out to them that are abroad; and nothing pleases them so much, as a few children to nurse. Others are fired with zeal, I will not say always according to knowledge, but these are forward to sound an alarm, to awaken, and to plow up the fallow ground. Thus love draws the one, and zeal drives the other; and while these two springs last, the work goes off tolerable easy, and the workmen are much pleased, especially with themselves. But when the former spring becomes dry, and the nurslings, like the daughters of the horse-leach, cry, Give, give, and there is nothing but a dry breast—then the forward nurse would be glad to put up a bill in the window, with the following inscription, 'No nurse children taken in here.' The plowman begins to look back,

but Lot's wife stands in the way; but the breasts are put up, and weaning time comes on, that we may learn to eat meat, yea, strong meat, and not milk, for that is for babes, and for them who are unskilful in the word of righteousness.

Weaning serves to exercise our senses, to discern between good and evil, and these trials lead us under the Spirit to full age, so as to be able to digest strong meat; but as long as we can get milk, this sort of food will not go down: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts," Isai. xxviii. 9. This teaching makes us pastors after God's own heart, who are to feed the people with knowledge and understanding; and I have no doubt but my son, who was forward enough at the first, now finds that all the felicity of the just is not confined to the pulpit, nor all the happiness under the sun peculiar to the ministry.

When the bible cannot be read with light and life, because it is sealed; when the gate of life, and door of hope are both closed; when heaven frowns, and satan smiles; when the heart is too full, too big to vent its grief, and God denies access, and the least apparent relief; when heaven appears to resist us, and satan to reproach us; when the people are assembling in hope, and the preacher alone in despondency; the flock expect-

ing the sermon, and the priest at a loss for a text; God's rod on the back, and enmity rising in the heart; the people waiting for comfort, but the ambassador is weeping in bitter grief—this sort of work would make him run as well as the former, that is, he would be as glad to run back, as he was at first to run forward.

But the branch that is in the vine must have a threefold purging; the head from blindness, darkness, ignorance, and confusion, that the watchman may see; the heart from idols, that Christ may be all in all; and the whole soul from self, which sends forth a stinking savour, that God may make manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place, 2 Cor. ii. 14. The more the branch is purged, the closer it sticks to the vine; and the closer the union with Christ, the more savoury, the more unctuous, and more precious is the branch. The preacher wants ten times the purging that the hearer does. The hearer works for himself, and all he gets he keeps; we work for others. A whole day in the furnace may afford one meal, but the first sermon empties the cupboard; so the preacher starves himself to feed others. The more powerful he preaches, the more lively the people, but the longer he preaches the deader he gets; life works in them, but death in him. Tender my love to the friends at N. and G. and accept the same from thy friend and father in Christ Jesus.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XI.

To Mr. T.

Dear Friend,

To pray for the death of any person is contrary to the word of God. When the disciples desired fire from heaven to consume the inhabitants of Capernaum, they were rebuked by the Saviour; and if a person prays for the death of another, in order to get rid of a cross, or to enjoy their property, the sin is still the greater, and cowardice or covetousness is the root of it; and if they pray for the death of a person out of revenge, the spirit is nigh of kin to that of Cain. If a person triumph at the death of an enemy, and supposes himself a favourite of God on this account, Israel might draw the same conclusion at the destruction of Pharaoh, but God destroyed all the Israelites that believed not; the answer of pardon and peace from God through Christ, and that alone, can shew us that we are prevalent with God. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: lest the Lord see it and it displease him," Prov. xxiv. 17, 18.

Tender my kind respects to the person of whom

great reward. Until then we must grope on like the blind for the wall, in a day that is not dark nor light, with transient visits, momentary relief, pleasing but passing operations, short indulgences, and apparent long neglects, as spectacles to the world, and sport for fools. Farewel.

W. H.

LETTER XIII.

I am doubtful whether you will ever be able to stop the mouth of a blasphemous devil, as he is given up to a perpetual course of sinning, and will send his darts through our minds at every turn, when he is permitted to find but the least access to us. I do not suppose that I have been entirely free from them for one month together for these twenty years; at first they terrified me beyond measure, but they leave no guilt, and bring no wrath down from heaven against our souls; nor will God call us to an account because satan wants to make us as bad as himself.

I have known the time when satan has been sending his curses into my heart even in my pulpit, before I have begun my text, and I have been rejoicing in my God not five minutes after; and at other times his furious attacks have driven

me to my knees, and I have had a heaven upon earth when I came there; so that the shafts of satan having lost their force, and being so long accustomed to them, and finding the goodness and faithfulness of God always the same, they are not so weighty and grievous as in my infancy and childhood. As for the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, he will never be mended, the father of him is the most foul, filthy, unclean creature in all the world, and you know that every sin that a man commits, is without the body, setting aside every species of fornication, for these are peculiar to the body, and of the body it is said, "Dust thou art;" and it is declared, that "Dust shall be the serpent's meat." The inward workings of our old man is the same as the mind of satan, and only impure lusts and false doctrines can feed that foul spirit.

God never leaves me one day but this kind of fare becomes my sorrowful meat, and when I can get no better, no other food, I often feed upon the vain imaginations or imaginary sweets of these, till barrenness comes on, the furnace next, meekness next, and power next, and then lightness of mind, and then the old fare again. No one that has ever opened their mind to me know, neither male nor female, but what has given me to understand that they were not ignorant of Paul's confession, "It wrought in me all manner

of concupiscence." I expect this old man to pursue me till within two hours of death, and I have no doubt but it will live in your head when the other end is dead; it has its seat not in what we have received when Paul says, "We have the mind of Christ," but it lives in the carnal mind which is enmity, and wherefore called the carnal mind? because carnal things live in it: "With my mind I serve the law of God," says Paul, "but with my flesh," or fleshly mind, "I serve the law of sin." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."

Ever thine,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XIV.

TO MRS. M. now MRS. B.

WELL, Betty, how dost thou come on, my daughter? I hope thou sharest in the rich repast, and sweet banquets, which (according to what I hear) you are entertained with in my absence. The good Lord is very kind and favourable to me, he hath not let me have one real barren time in my soul in the pulpit, since my arrival here.

Of all his creatures I am the least, and the most unworthy, and yet of all creatures the most indulged; but he will dwell with them that tremble at his word, he will love them that love him, and them that honour him he will honour. No state so safe, so sure, as that of being poor in spirit, and dependent on his fulness; he knows them that trust in him, and them that trust in themselves; he will humble the proud, and exalt the humble.

This place is truly Tottenham and the Tabernacle, never more profession nor less possession in any place than in this; legions of young candidates, as the cant word is, for the ministry, but not the least sign of one qualification for it. But my happiness lays in my God and Saviour, and if I cannot find it there, I can find it no where else. O how few is the number of God's elect! and not one preacher in a thousand, in the possession of one thing that accompanies salvation; what a blessed thing to be taught of God, and to know whom we have believed. I had about a dosen divines under me last Tuesday evening, and expect fourteen to the dozen this night; I shall help to store their garrets, that is all that is required by those who have got a pulpit in their head; their eye is single at human applause, and God gives them human shame, when they have got their reward of Hosanna. Give my love to James, Mr. and Mrs. B. and to

all that love the altogether-lovely Lord Jesus Christ.

Ever thine in heart and affection,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XV.

If we are to be cloathed with the apparel that the Holy Spirit reveals, brings nigh, and puts on, such as the robe of righteousness, the garments of salvation, and the cloathing of humility, we must expect the work of stripping to go on also. Stripping and emptying, is the hardest and most difficult work when carrying on, that I have ever felt, but to this day I find and feel, the salutary effects and blessed fruits of it. The believer and the Saviour are just like a pair of balances, as self is abased and goes down, the Saviour is exalted, extolled, and very high, hence self-denial and following him are coupled together.

As Christ is put on, so self is crossed and put off, that is, his requests are denied, as Christ's word is complied with; and it is a poor furnace that discovers no dross, weakens no member of the old man, or that purges away no tin. It is a truth that no sermon is so savoury as those that

are brought out of the fire, and delivered in self-loathing; nor does any believer hear so well, nor pay such attention, nor feed so heartily, as he does who obtains his appetite, like the prodigal, from the mighty famine; being hunger-bitten he goes with bonds within, while unbelief and satan follow close at his heels without. This is the man that sits down under the Lord's shadow with great delight, and finds his fruit sweet to his taste; "The full soul loatheth the honey-comb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

An honest heart chooseth affliction before ease, when a pharisee, filled with self, prefers his own performances before the promise of life, and such souls with an appetite thus sharpened with bitter herbs, are seldom or ever sent empty away, when once they have begun to taste that the Lord is gracious. Concerning the doubts about the three persons in the godhead, tell your friend that the following account is safe, satisfying, and experimental. The Father is to be known by a sense of his love, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee," Jer. xxxi. 3; this is seen by chastening of us, and leading us to Christ; this is coming to God, (to be judged, tried, chastened, and drawn,) the Judge of all, Heb. xii. 23. Get pardon and peace, and then you come to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things

than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 24. And the third is, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6. Here is the love of God the Father, "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him." Here is the pardoning grace of Christ through faith, and Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and he that believes hath the witness in himself, the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. The pardoning grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, Amen.

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XVI.

I RECEIVED the letter, by which he seems to be troubled about many things, and according to his account, that which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. However, there is bread enough in our father's house, and sufficient is our Lord's fulness to supply our every want. We are not in hell, not in irons, nor in black despair; "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins," Lam. iii. 39. Thy work,

thy whole work lays in a small compass, the afflicted are to pray, the longing soul is to let his requests be made known unto God, the hoping soul is to watch and wait, and "It is good for a man to both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God." If this is good in the sight of God then it is well-doing in us, and let us not be weary at it.

He that believes shall not make haste, faith stands in the power of God; every deliverance, every support, every enlargement, or inward change, affords a fresh footing for faith. There are two things that make her move, deep distress will drive her to act, and at these times she will act with a witness, she will maintain her hold, and give up nothing, and will pursue her request and take no denial. The next thing that moves her is love, this draws her forth only as a companion to faith, and to see that all the glory of every love-visit is given to God. Otherwise love is nothing but the enjoyment of what faith has fetched in; faith must have all the honour of bringing all the sweet morsels into the heart. "We live by faith," and love banquets on the provision; and the fullest belly is nothing else but the fulness of joy.

The word, or promise of life, is a coal, the Holy Spirit the life of the coal, love is the fire or heat of the coal, and joy is the flame of that fire which breaks out and discovers itself, either in

vocal acclamations or on the skin of the face, which reflects the glee of the heart. My pen has run away with me, and carried me into things which were not in all my thoughts when I begun, and what you make of me and it I know not.

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XVII.

ALL your's came to hand. I had it often secretly suggested to my mind while you were here, that some trial would succeed at your return. God revives, refreshes, or renews the soul by his word and spirit; some scorching exercises succeed to wither the buddings of corruption and pride. The days of prosperity and adversity are interchangeably mixed, and set one against the other; and blessed for evermore be the name of God for both, for without them we cannot live. The least, yea, every spark of light, and every grain of grace, and every word of truth, and every breath of spiritual life, will stand the fire; no flood of temptation can drown these, no fire can scorch them, no flame can kindle upon them, God himself declares this.

A tree of righteousness should bring forth fruit in due season. I have long been vexed and grieved

at your unseasonable fruit, where it was not needed; but no advice had any weight. I do not know you are so much indebted to any instrument as to me, I have the greatest power here and no other. Read 1 Cor. ix. 10, 11, 12. God may try us, and will try us, but he will never leave us nor forsake us, but will richly supply all our need, according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, who is heir of all things. We shall never want if we trust in the Son of God. I am the most singular witness of this I believe in all the world, the chapel, and all that I have in hand, heart, and hope, come in answer to the poor petitions of faith; and all that comes this way has a peculiar flavour and sweetness in it, it is like the widow's miraculous oil, or the wine kept till last, which was poured out at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and which wine is not out yet.

God gives us faith to live by, to work by, and to walk by; and the more this grace is exercised the brighter, the better, the stronger, and the bolder it grows; and every fruit is a prize, work it which way you will. It honours God, and God will honour that; it will work its way through a host of foes; it knows nothing of impossibilities; it will wade through a sea of difficulties; make mountains sink, and vallies rise; it straightens the crooks, and smooths the roughs, and this I know. Will drop a line to ——, when time permits.

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XVIII.

GRACE and peace be with ——, hoping she will be enabled to keep out Hagar and Ishmael. Both the epistles came to hand, but my book has swelled to that degree in my hands, that it employed me almost all last week, but is now done. Do not give place to every whim and turn, snare and device of satan. God says, "Be not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," Rom. xii. 11. Fulness of bread and idleness was the sin of Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 49. If we start at every attempt of the devil, he will soon make us desist from every good work.

When I began to preach he set every difficulty that attended the work before me, and the impossibility of illiterate persons being able to explain the profound mysteries of the Bible. When that failed, then he threatened me that he would pursue me with unremitted rigour, and stir up every individual against me, this he soon made good. The next step was tempting me all the way home after I had done preaching, and terrifying me with the continual thoughts and fears of his personal appearance to me. After this he shifted the sails, and aimed, as he perceived that God still strengthened me, to puff me up,

telling me upon every discourse that of all that were born of woman, there had not appeared a greater prophet than Parson Sack; this gained my ear, and here he was not so much suspected as in his black cloak. All the time he worked at this, my pride was counterbalanced with barren times; one time alive, the next time dead; again liberty, then bondage: this made me tremble at pride, and turn a deaf ear to his artful wiles.

The next step was to send his darts through my mind, even in the pulpit, and even tempt me to blaspheme the work, especially when straitened; this has baffled, confused, and confounded me, and at times made me stop while the dart went hissing through my mind. The next step was, he laboured to make me aim at universal reformation, to draw no lines, but to handle the word so as to gain all, and give offence to none; to this I listened, and approved, and aimed at it, but when I begun I went on as usual, forgot all my schemes, and was carried through with more zeal, and drawing if possible more strait lines than ever.

His present work is raising up and sending out fresh evangelists, and setting them to lampoon the Doctor, and I believe he has done better by this, than by all the others. For when he has sent out two or three thousand of these, and some of every denomination, and all are unanimous against the Antinomian, and cry him down with one voice; no simple soul unenlightened can

doubt the truth of so many witnesses, and especially when all are evangelical preachers; and I am not much mistaken if I have not been led to write this last book, to give a universal challenge in order to forestall the devil's market, in this last branch of business.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIX.

In my last journey into the north, my success was exceeding great. I still hear accounts of it, and indeed God has greatly indulged me in his work of late; but at some intervals I have been very cold and lifeless, though even then I press on, fully persuaded there is no alternative. The Socinians who occupy ——, being few in number, finding the lease near out, intended to engage the whole for themselves, and we have left it.

L—— complains of changes, when these cease where are we? we must be all love and joy, then where is the daily cross, the furnace of affliction, the path of much tribulation? Or else we must get into carnal ease in Zion, and then woe to us. There is no appetite, no life, no feeding, no activity, no growth, no grace, where there is no

changes. "They have no changes," saith the Psalmist, "therefore they fear not God." This dark foggy winter tries me not a little, but I am looking forward to that country, where night and winter shall be no more. My infirmities now are not few, and every week they must be worse; my eyes fail not a little, besides short breath, and rheumatic pains; but though the outward man thus perish, the inward man is most certainly renewed day by day.

God bless you,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XX.

THE plague is in your house as well as in mine, by your account. Subdued sin in the saints, and unsubdued sin in servants, are both the plague of leprosy, and these will abide till our earthly tabernacles are dissolved, and raised up anew; and then there shall be no more the Canaanite in the land, nor the uncircumcised in the city. Until then tribulation must attend us, but life is but a moment when compared with Paul's weight, and eternal weight of glory. Every thing that shews us the true state of this world, and the depths of iniquity that abound in it, deadens us

to it, and raises in our mind the glory of that salvation that has saved us from it; for were it not for the elect and their light in it, and for the few remains of law and justice that are left, it would be like hell itself.

God has long since made manifest my heart, and a most tremendous sight it was, but I could not believe that all were like me; but within this last year I have seen more of this world than ever I did before, and of the depths of satan in the souls of men; at this sight, only one door of hope appears, and that is, a hope of leaving it. Well may John say, Truly our fellowship is with the Father and the Son, and the whole world lieth in the hand of the wicked one; for so it should be read. But what stupendous grace is that, that hath chosen us out of such a state, a set of such poor, and despicable creatures.

We have the advantage of all in this, we know them, but they know not us; we know their birth and pedigree, but they know not our's; we see their state and end, but our's is hid: "The spiritual man judgeth all things, but he is judged of none." Last week I was exercised with various disagreeables, and the prince of this world came, and found rebellion enough in me; and on Sunday forenoon I felt the effects of it. But in the afternoon at the table, I was quite above myself, and more than mortal in him, and

in his work; the Doctor stayed at the foot of the mount, only the new man ascended. Love to all friends.

In the path of tribulation,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXI.

To the Hewer of wood, and Drawer of water, greeting,

I MUST confess that satan has put a most honourable name and calling upon you, since it is added for the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord in the place that he shall choose. I hope to be employed in this work, so long as the Lord permits me to live, "I have hewed them by the prophets, and slain them with the words of my mouth," Hos. vi. 5. To hew them is to make room for grace, and dry and corrupt trees cannot be made good trees without it. To slay them is doing as Peter did, "Arise, kill and eat;" those that the law kills, Christ quickens, this is the food of the preacher.

But drawing water is sweeter still; In those days shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation, Isai. xii. 3. This work, even for the whole congregation, has been my employ for many years; nor am I quite weary of it even now, though I meet with not a few discourage-

ments in it. I have no doubt but satan lays hard at you, he will not lose a subject easily, but his power is nothing against the Son of God; it pleases God often to suffer him to tempt us, that we may know what dreadful hands we are fallen into, and that it is not without a real cause that Christ was manifest in the flesh, to destroy the works of the devil, which none can understand who are strangers to his assaults.

By bearing our sin and suffering death, the Saviour destroyed him, as the head in his usurpation; by redeeming our souls from the curse and wrath, under which we and satan both lay, he spoiled him of his prey by taking us and leaving him; and by attending his gospel by the power of his Spirit, he wounds this head over divers countries; by the light of the gospel, satan and his works are laid open, and by the convictions which the Spirit gives, the peaceable possession of the strong man armed is disturbed, and the power of God coming so near, and restraining and limiting his power, fills him with rage and desperation.

His power being bridled by the Holy Spirit, he cannot reign, nor rule, nor lead captive at his will as usual, therefore he tempts, terrifies, and labours to sink us in despair, or to entangle us by art and craft to sin, because he cannot compel us himself; but the stronger than the strong man armed, restrains him and guards us.

"I will give you power to tread on serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy;" and the Holy Spirit, working by the power of his grace, is this power; and stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. And this is plain in you, for notwithstanding all satan's attempts and attacks, you are just where you was, and I know that no man can stand one moment under satan's assaults, without momentary support: "I will water them every moment, I will keep it night and day." Hence Cain, Saul, Esau, Judas, went into desperation at the first onset, and who makes us to differ? The vail by which the god of this world blinds the eyes of men is gone from you, prejudice also is removed; nor are you given up to hate either God the Father or his dear Son, because you are led earnestly to seek both, and as the wise man says, "The desire of a man is his kindness;" and this kindness is in you, though the carnal mind abstractedly considered is enmity.

How many things have we been, and even now are tempted to, and yet none of these obeyed, save some such slips as Paul speaks of, Rom. vii. 23. Does he then lead captive at his will? Does that strong man armed keep possession, and his goods in peace? No, we know it is not so, for when our feet have been almost gone, our steps had well nigh slipped, then, even then the interference of God has been

most conspicuous; his strength perfectly sufficient in our greatest weakness, and this more than once; ascribe it to any thing else but God if you can: and if satan should drive you to deny this, you will never be able to get the Amen of conscience.

The power of God is already in your will, you are already willing, to will is present with you, and when God performs the work of faith with power, or reveals his arm in leading you to his dear Son, then you will do as well as will; and remember the call and invitation to the water of life is to the thirsty, and to them that will. Faith is already pent up in thy heart; when the Spirit convinces us of sin, he works at the same time every grace in the heart, though we know not what manner of Spirit we are of. Hope and expectation have oft appeared, and now and then a momentary confidence, now and then a ray of joy, and a sense of unworthiness, surely he never can take notice of such a wretch as me. Love also, both to the Lord and the brotherhood; and sure I am that one clear view of Christ, or powerful sensation of his dying love, will draw all these things out; "And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord I believe, and he worshipped him," John ix. 37. 38.

W. H.

LETTER XXII.

Church Street, Paddington.

I WISH grace, mercy, and peace to be multiplied to you and to your spouse, through the knowledge of our blessed Lord and Saviour, who is the author and finisher of our faith. As for fathers, and fathers in law, they are all in the hand of the Lord; the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and as rivers of waters he turneth them whither he will. What men say stands for nothing, unless God put his Amen to it. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Lam. iii. 37.

A young man that belongs to us, whom the Lord was pleased to work upon, who lived with an uncle in town, had so exasperated his father, that he drove him from his presence, and a few days after offered him a thousand guineas to recant his religion; but upon being informed by the son, that it was a poor religion that was bought and sold, he went home, and that night intended to alter his will, and leave him a shilling. But that night he dropped down dead in the stable, and the son came in for all that God had appointed for him. God stays back the hand of the sinner, so that he cannot perform his enterprize,

and he is sure to find it hard work to kick against God.

The great shepherd has got a few chosen sheep in the world, and he will have them in spite of fathers and mothers; they have only bred them and nursed them for him, and he has given them thei hire; these sheep the Saviour knows, and sooner or later they shall all know him. If you and your dame both unite, and wrestle hard with the angel, you may depend upon it that Esau and his men must offer to drive the sheep; it is only to let your request be made known unto God, and all things are possible to be done for them that believe. The Almighty will shew you many tokens for good, many signs of his benign favour, and compass you about with many blessings, that none will know but God and yourselves. He has promised to make all his goodness pass before us, and mercy and truth shall follow us all our days; he is near to them that call upon him, and be found of them that seek him.

Fear no man, but God only, and when thy ways please the Lord, he will make thine enemies to be at peace with thee. A sparrow shall not fall to the ground without a grant from God, nor one hair of thy head perish, much less to be turned out of house and home because we follow the thing that good is. God compasses them that fear him as with a shield, while destruction and misery is in

all the sinner's ways; and if destruction is in all his ways, he is never one minute sure of his life.

With respect to the inward state of mind, patiently wait and quietly hope for the salvation of the Lord; it is good to be exercised and disciplined, God opens our ears to discipline, and visits our sins with a rod; but it is in very faithfulness that he afflicteth us. We must not despise the day of small things; they that sow in tears shall reap in joy, and they that seek long, feel the pearl of greater price when they find it. None but God and his elect know, the happiness that is to be felt and enjoyed in religion. When you have waded through a few more difficulties, you will understand my meaning. I have been writing a book, which is almost done, or I would have answered your letter before. Tender my kind respects to your spouse, and I hope she will choose the good part that shall not be taken away from her. Search the scriptures, be stedfast and constant at private prayer. Stick to one another, bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ, who bore the burden of us all.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXIII.

YOUR letter came to hand, and it appears that ——— lease of his long life is not the grant of God, for sickness is no proof of it; and looking like Ahaz, not to God but to the physicians, is quite a wrong step to procure long life. God the Saviour is our life, and the length of our days, and because he lives we shall live also, and this we know by the principle he has infused into us, by the appetite he has given us, and by the mouth of faith which can taste, savour, relish, feed, and feast upon his soul-reviving presence.

The bride-children cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, only when he is taken away from them, then they shall fast in those days, and I would to God that those days did never come at all; for then the devil is sure to bring all his choice morsels, and if he cannot vend these goods, then he will fill us with hard thoughts and heart-risings against the good man of the house, because he has left us in a state of widowhood, and suggests that the Lord hath wooed us to gain our heart, and now he is slighting our affections. But if he speaks fair, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart; besides, he has

no part nor lot in our matters, his name is not in our book, nor is he in our covenant; he is not included in our promises, nor is he a friend either to the bride or the bridegroom.

All his work is forbidding the banns, putting away, and preaching up divorces; and these are the things which the Lord hates. But God will circumcise the hearts of his chosen to love him, and where this is done no rival can ever ravish or charm the soul as he does, and therefore the heart is barred against all pretenders; for light and life, peace and joy, comfort and quietude, the good wine and the anointing oil, do not attend their visits; and we know that he is loved, "Because of the savour of his good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee," Song i. 3. Tender my duty to Mr. B. and to all the blood-royal.

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER XXIV.

I AM engaged at present in a cold, lifeless, disagreeable business, which is a cold chill running continually over the outward man, and keeps me low, lifeless, and inactive. But we are tenants at will, and every apparent decay

keeps us looking at the end: "We have a building of God, a house not made with hands."

This wisdom I have long observed, and it appears great unto me, God loves the work of his own hands, but his soul abhors all the additions which men or devils have put to it. The whole of God's work respecting the elect is now made Christ's charge, and his will is, that all the Father has given him he raised up the last day, that nothing be lost, no, not one hair of our head; these are all numbered, and not one shall perish. But the whole work of the devil in us, must all be destroyed, and not one spot of sin, nor a wrinkle of old age must remain. This is the good work begun, founded in fear, and it will be perfected in love. Quickening the soul by the Spirit is the first dominion, and quickening the body will be making it a subject of ultimate glory; "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the glory of their father's kingdom, for ever and ever." The first fruit of the Spirit, is incorruptible seed, and putting on immortality, is swallowing all mortality up of life.

My mind and thoughts often plow, ponder, and pore over these profound depths, but the old vail hangs heavy, and makes chequer-work of the brightest and best views. But this is our comfort, the kingdom of God is not hid from our eyes, for if we were not born again we could not see the kingdom of God; but blessed be God we do see

it, feel it, and know the invaluable power of it: and blessed be God we understand the nature of it, for it comes at the reception of the Holy Ghost. It stands in his power, and consists of his grace, and in this grace the Saviour reigns, for even the Holy Spirit comes from his infinite fulness; he sends his Spirit upon us, this is the kingdom of God coming with power; and when he influences the soul with this grace, then is the kingdom of God set up within.

I know well the beginning of it, and have long watched the progress of it, and am in some measure acquainted with the glory of it, by its marvellous light, and with the majesty of it which appears in the divine grandeur, with which it enriches, ennobles, and exalts the mind; and its power appears in crushing the reign of satan, sin, and death. All beneath the sun appears a bauble, and as the dust of a balance, when compared with the glorious majesty of the kingdom of God; and sure, they are the best messengers of the nations, best ambassadors, and the bearers of the best tidings, that say unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth:" sweet tidings to them that are in the chains of sin, and galled with satan's yoke.

I went forth at first with these tidings, I knew the sweet power, but my head was in a fog, and upon proper reflection I have no checks, no remorse; all my present new things, serve only to confirm the old. Nor has one dying man or

woman ever said, that I had deceived them, and this has been a cordial to me. Thousands hope in profession, others hope in the letter, legions hope in their knowledge and judgment, and more hope in the water, and not a few in the Lord's supper; but these are no branches of that power, in which the kingdom of God stands. Several of late, and even deacons too, have owned on a death bed, they had been deceived, and would not suffer their own pastors to come near them. These tidings set me to examine, but the Antinomian stands acquitted. God bless you.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXV.

To Miss E. B.

Cabin.

I THANK thee my dear friend for thine epistle, and bless my God for his goodness to thee, and for all the visits and indulgences which his undeserved mercy grants to such poor creatures, who are unworthy of every mercy. But you complain that these joys are short; I think my poor little one does not seem to understand the mind of God in these his communications, nor consider rightly the end for which these influences and

exercises of grace are sent. Observe, that the Holy Spirit and his grace is not called a pond, pool, or standing water, but quite the reverse; being waters, or water of life, a flowing brook, and a springing well, all which is expressive of a continual emanation, or perpetual flowing; and the great end God aims at in this is, that he may be glorified, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit." All acceptable fruit is produced by the Holy Spirit, and therefore called the fruits of the Spirit, as our sacrifices are called spiritual sacrifices, our worship, worshipping in the Spirit, and our service is called serving in the newness of the Spirit.

Hence let my dear friend observe, that all purging and purifying is to promote fruitfulness; My Father, says Christ, purges the branch to make it more fruitful, or that it may bring forth more fruit. The next thing intended by it is to refresh, animate, quicken, and stir us up to fruit-bearing; "Their leaf shall be green, neither shall they cease from yielding fruit." Hence every divine influence from God, is to go back again to God, and it all comes and goes through the mediator; hence it is called watering every moment, and keeping the vineyard night and day. Mark now what I say; we are sometimes in trouble, under the stirrings of corruption, or guilt, fear, shame, bondage, or unbelief, and altogether barren; presently godly sorrow, pious

grief, self-loathing operates; "Is any afflicted? let him pray." "Call upon me in trouble, I will deliver," &c.; we give ourselves unto prayer, and soon this sorrowful frame is gone. Soon after thankfulness springs up, we bless him, praise him, and adore him; and by speaking to him, we spend that holy frame in the praises of him that sent it.

This stirring us up to fruit-bearing, is done in innumerable ways, sometimes under the word, and how does the soul long to get alone to pour it out; sometimes in reading or meditation, reflecting or looking back to past mercies. Sometimes by a word occurring, a favourable providence turning up, some deliverance wrought, or desirable way opened; a ray shines, the bowels are moved by love, or a humbling, softening, pleasing sensation flows through the mind, and dissolves the whole soul, and off we go to discharge the rich contents into the fountain of life from whence all flows: either by thanks, "Sacrifice thanksgiving;" or in blessings, "Thy saints bless thee;" or in praises, "He that offereth praise, glorifieth me;" or in adoration, "I adore thee, O God of my fathers." And according to the different attributes of God which appear, so is our praise, which is celebrating, or speaking good of the holy properties of God; "God has spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice;" good and upright is the Lord. "His mercy endureth for ever." "Great

is the Lord, and greatly to be praised." "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens."

Thus, says Christ, "I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my wine with my milk; eat, O friends," Song v. 1. These are the uses of our holy frames, not kept for us to bathe in; Christ receives his own with usury. I intend soon to visit B. and hope to preach two Sundays in the orchard, at which time you would like perhaps to be there. Let me hear from you, if it is but two lines, as I long for your soul's welfare. I have had a line from your father; I am sorry poor Mary is low, hope to send her a scrap this week. God bless thee.

Ever your's in Christ,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

I RECEIVED my friend's kind epistle, and in every thing executed her orders. It most certainly is the unalterable purpose, and revealed will of God, that the just shall live by faith; and

every one thing that has a tendency to draw my mind, or my dependence from God, is a let and stagnation to faith. The grace of faith is like a ministerial gift, it wants stirring up; it is the better, the brighter, the stronger for using. If it hath no difficulties to cope with and surmount, no errands to fetch in, no messages and petitions to carry, it lingers, sinks, gets inactive, weak, and almost dead, until the Spirit which is the life of all grace, quickens it afresh, and sets it to work; Read Rev. iii. 2. Without exercise, faith dwindles into a mere habit; the principle remains, but the actings and exercises are not felt and enjoyed.

The contents of your's greatly surprised me, but God is the first cause, and one under your roof the second cause. Every divine lesson must be learned experimentally, and then the impression will sink both into the ears and into the heart. When God has implanted his grace in our hearts, which is secretly and often imperceptibly done with respect to us, he intends to discover his goodness and his relationship, as a covenant God, to us; and whatever discoveries he intends to make of himself, or of his goodness to us, he will bring us into such straits, as shall compel us to use our interest with him, or sink for the want of his aid. When he intended that I should be brought to observe, and depend upon his providence, he often took away, to my view of things, every means of sustenance, and

let me see his promises of daily food; and his withdrawing all apparent means, and closing all doors, was in effect telling me to call on him, or trust in him or starve.

So when he has implanted the grace of hope, we know not what we are in possession of, but he brings us either into the furnace, or horrible pit, and then says, Hope and despair, swim or go to the bottom; and at such times many evidences, tokens, former favours slighted before are now courted, called in, hugged, and embraced, as friends in time of need. In this way have I been taught, believe or die, hope or despair, trust in my providence, or more plainly, trust in God who provides for all, or starve. And when I come to use the implanted stock of grace within, and to try the faithfulness of God to his word, I soon found what I could do. And still look, wonder, and admire, what he could do, would do, and did for poor me.

In this we see the weakness of the best of men, the malice of the best of friends if carnal, and the determination of God to keep the objects of his choice, the darlings of his soul, and the sons and daughters of his household, dependent upon him. I like it best as it is, the old man loves food, but no physic, a stock in hand, but no dependence; ease, but no emptying from vessel to vessel, all at home, but no actings or goings out in faith, to fetch matters in. Satan frets and feels

more under our exercising of faith, and accesses to God, than ever we do under all his foul, furious, and fiery assaults, and darts. My love to poor Mary.

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

The Cabin on board the Providence.

THE Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee, and with all them who know our Lord Jesus Christ, and those that feel their need of him, and favour his righteous cause. Beloved of the Lord, I have been of late not a little indulged with access to God through Christ, have had much freedom in private prayer, and have given myself much to it; have been kept very meek, submissive, and heavenly-minded; and have given myself much up to retirement, and to a close walk with my God. In all my secret engagements I have remembrance of thee in my prayers, that the throne of grace may be accessible to thee, and the door of hope displayed; that thou mayest, agreeable to our Lord's most gracious promise, Go in and out, and find pasture. When this is denied, like Israel of old, we

wander from mountain to mountain, and from hill to hill; they have, says God, forgotten their resting place. Christ, says the prophet, is our rest, where the weary are to rest, and he is our refreshing. And how sweet does the soul sink down composed and becalmed in the dying love, and finished work of the Son of God; the conscience purged by his precious blood, rests in peace; the heart is settled, in confidence; the mind, in hope; and the heart fixed in the immutable love of God.

By the application of the atonement, God takes away the guilt of sin, that it should not sting; the sting of death is sin. By justification, or by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, he takes away the destructive power of sin, that it should not condemn; there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, it is God that justifies; and he that believes is justified freely from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. By the most holy Spirit of all grace, God takes away the dominion of sin, that it shall not reign; "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace," Rom. vi. 14. And by glorification in the great day he will take away the very being of it, that it never more may be found among the saints; "At that time the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they

shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve," Jerem. l. 20.

This, my dear friend, is the good work that Paul speaks of, "He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Phill. i. 6. This work shall be carried on until the day of Christ's appearing, and then it will be finished; this is what David alludes to, when he says, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the works of thine own hands," Psal. cxxxviii. 8. Thine own hands have begun, and in much mercy didst thou begin it, and this work is my concern, or it is that which concerneth me; and surely thou wilt not forsake it, but perfect it, and this I gather from the eternity of thy mercy, thy mercy endureth for ever, forsake not the work of thine own hands: thou hast already made me a vessel of mercy, prepare that vessel for glory.

This is the work, Betty, that is going on, and how restless, uneasy, and disquieted are we, if he seems to neglect it, or we to perceive it falling to decay. If it is not revived every few days, we begin to sink; a visit, a promise, an enlargement in prayer, a propitious look, a transient ray will do, but some morsel for this new man must be had, or we complain. Let me know how you all do, and when you heard from B.

Ever your's to serve in the Lord Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Cabin, Monday Morning.

My dear Friend,

It is winter, it is cold, and I am and have been for some time in the possession of one of the worst coughs that ever fell to my share. I have got I firmly believe a confirmed asthma, and no wonder if the bellows decay, when the pipes have been hard worked for upwards of thirty years. This cold has been long on me, and is continually renewing, so that I am almost a stranger to beloved sleep.

When this came first on, I felt the iron sinew in my neck, a brazen brow, a stubborn will, a hard unrelenting heart, and an obstinate mind. I fretted, I cavilled, I contended, I disputed, I murmured, I rebelled; I kicked up, I hung back, I started aside, I fell down in the furrow, but could not, would not yield. So the devil and the Doctor went on, and carnal reason and unbelief they helped forward the calamity. Sunday came on, still the war lasted; when in the pulpit all blowed over, and all was well, and I was carried through with a high hand. But when the work was done, and I again alone, I

renewed the attack, and reassumed the dispute. Sometimes I was a pharisee, and ready to plead my integrity, usefulness, and the sincerity of my love; then I hardened my mind in desperate sorrow, saying, Let me alone; then Gallio-like, kill or save, and let me sink or swim I care not. Now and then a reflection upon many past favours, kind tokens, and tender dealings came to my mind; I relented and bowed my knees, and asked submission. A few soft tears rolled down, and the heavenly dove whispered within, this will terminate in a renewal of the work, and so I believed for awhile.

After this I rose up, and summoned all the black band again, and revived the old arguments. Could any soul think that the Coal-heaver should have so many coals of juniper in his sack? But previous to this, I had in my cabin one afternoon, such a frame of energy with God in prayer, as was wonderful to me; and finding the door open, and the sceptre held out, and his ear attentive, the king was held in the galleries. I went again and again, for all that I could think of, and among the rest that he would cure my asthma, and I believed he would; and by terrible things in righteousness has he answered me.

But there are other answers besides these, these are preparatory, or to empty me of self, that the new wine may come into the new bottle. Not long since I was thinking, we have but little

converting work going on, and a thought sprung up, I have had but little soul-travail of late, and soon after this labour came on. And now twice have I had tidings of one long in the deep, coming to an anchor, and another coming fairly out, after a long labour, a reconversion, and after going into the water, &c. and many more are in travail among us, so that I expect the lying-in hospital to be at work. And now my dear companion in the Lord Jesus, let me exhort thee to cleave close to Christ, with full purpose of heart, for all but Christ, and those in whom he dwells, is death. I remember you all in every prayer of mine. I should be glad to see you, and Mary, if convenient.

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Friend,

YOUR'S came to hand just as I was deeply engaged in packing up for a tour to C. in order to take fresh air, as my appetite seemed nearly gone. I went a long round, and preached four times at C. and I believe I was a more welcome guest

there than I had ever been before; and to my view of things, there seems to be a good work going on there. Poor L. seems upon hoping ground, nay, further, he told me in his last letter, that he was more comfortable in the hope of salvation than formerly; and his countenance expresses much more than his pen or tongue.

Yesterday I seemed to have got a fresh cold, and have been poorly all night, and the rheumatism in my shoulders pinches me not a little; but this is not our rest, it is polluted, and therefore we must look forward, and press after another, for "There remaineth a rest to the people of God." When God finished the works of creation, he rested on the seventh day, and when Christ had finished the work of redemption, his flesh rested in hope. So the soul that works out his salvation with fear and trembling, finds rest for his weary soul in the dying love, and finished work of Christ, and rests from his works as God did from his: "For we that believe, do enter into rest." And although this our rest is often disturbed, yet we rest fully persuaded that Christ has finished the work, and at times fully satisfied that we have our part in it; and when the light shines we rest contented: and the full assurance of faith, is nothing else but the full assurance of satisfaction, and hence the promise, they shall rest satisfied; and again, they shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.

In my first illness, I was very low, dry, and barren, but through the tender mercy of my God, I am not so now; though I feel myself in body very feeble. You look too much to yourself, it is looking to Jesus that does the work; "Look unto me and be ye saved." It is being strong in the fulness of grace that is in him, and looking to the promise; "I will water them every moment, I will keep them night and day." Looking out brings the comfort in, and then we look within till it is lost, this is our folly. Adieu.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXX.

TO MR. B.

My dear Friend,

How disappointed are those, how crossed, how entangled, ensnared, and ruined are those who make gold their hope, and this world their home; but what are we? and what could God see in us? But he will be merciful to whom he will shew mercy, and he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious; his gifts and calls are without repentance. He has repented that he made man, and he has often repented of the evil brought on man, and he has often repented of the good

whereby he has benefited a nation, when they have ungratefully sinned against him.

But of the gift of his dear Son to men, the gift of his Spirit to them, the gift of grace, the gift of eternal life, and the gift of glory, of these his gifts to his own elect he never repented; "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom:" and what is his good pleasure to give, he never will repent of. Nor does he repent of his calls; he calls some to labour in the vineyard, and some he calls by their labour to repentance; and he calls all his elect, to union, communion, and fellowship with the living vine, but he never repents of these calls, neither do we repent that he has called us. My love to all friends. Be sure to write soon.

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Beloved,

On Saturday I received Betsy's letter, informing me of my poor friend's illness, which I was much grieved to hear. I have spread it before

the Lord, and am waiting the event; however, of this I am well assured, that this sickness is not unto death, for they that believe shall never die, but sleep. Jesus tasted death for every man of his family upon the cross, at his resurrection he conquered death, and at the general resurrection of the just, he will swallow up death in victory; this is the last king that shall be dethroned, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed. This ghastly monarch reigned from Adam to Moses, and we have no power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war. It is appointed unto all men to tread this dark valley, which leads to the house appointed for all living: "As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more." Job xiv. 11, 12.

On the day that the just shall awake, shall the present heavens and earth pass away, the earth shall be burnt up, the elements shall melt, and the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, as soon as the archangel descends, and the trumpet of God is sounded. On the day the saints rise shall these heavens be rolled together, and as a vesture shall they be folded up, and they shall be changed: then shall the new heavens and new earth appear, and the righteous shall possess it, and inhabit it, and none but they, and that for a thousand years. This is the rest that remains for the people of God; and our present rest by

faith, in the dying love and finished work of Christ, which is resting assured, resting satisfied, resting contented, and resting in hope and expectation, is a pledge, an earnest, and the first fruits of this.

The best armour for the soul on a sick bed, is the breast plate of an imputed righteousness; this applied by the Spirit, and the witness of it in our conscience, is a piece of defensive armour, such as the curse of a broken law will never penetrate. It is proof against the sting of death, the darts of satan, and the sentence of the most righteous of all judges, who will never condemn the just, nor justify the wicked. And it is our right and title to the kingdom of God, for whom God justifies, them God glorifies. Hold this fast, my dearly beloved, to the end, for this is the righteousness of faith, and he that is our judge, and our Saviour, says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

The companion of faith is hope, for what faith credits, hope expects, they are twin sisters, and go hand in hand; "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three." Be patient, and hope to the end. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." The third promised support on a sick bed is peace, this is the fruit and effect of an imputed righteousness, the fruit of righteousness is peace; and is a grace that passes with us into

the other world. It is the end of faith in this life, and a fruit of glory in the life to come; "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." The Lord is as fond of seeing his children home, as we are of reaching his prepared mansion; and as earnest to grant the promised reward, as we are of the enjoyment of it. To them that believe Christ is precious, and precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. If my dear companion wishes to see me, send word. Grace and peace be ever with thee, so prays,

Thy friend and brother in Christ Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Friday Morning.

Dearly Beloved Companion in travel, and true Yoke-fellow in the kingdom of Christ,

Last night I received your very kind epistle, and when it came it found me very low; but as cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country, for the good Lord who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted me by the

coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but by the good account you send me of the enlargement of ——, under the word at my last visit. His countenance has for many years proclaimed him a bond-man, and sensible of his bonds, as all the king's state prisoners are, when the iron enters into the soul; and to such there is no ground of hope, but in the law of release.

The jubilee year by such is much longed for, and every stop, and distinction of the jubilee trumpet is observed; and sure I am that the sound of enlargement, and release of infinite debts, is attended with the joys and triumphs of the third heavens, for there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, as well as in the penitent soul, which is melting and dying in love. "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day long, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Faithfulness and truth go hand in hand, what divine veracity promises, divine faithfulness makes good, and then the poor soul sets to his seal that God is true. "Shall I cause to travail, and not cause to bring forth? Shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb, saith thy God?" No, as soon as Zion travails, she brings forth; God raises up the dead, and quickens them. Such are brought forth from insensibility, from carnal security, and from a death in sin,

and from the deep sleep of God; "And unto God the Lord belong the issues from death," Psalm lxviii. 20.

Thus she brings forth before she travails, and thus she is delivered before her pains came; guilt and wrath work in the soul, and life by the Spirit makes us feel it. God's blessing is life, life for evermore. God never calls or pronounces any man blessed, who is dead in sin, and dead to God; Blessed is the man whom God chastens, and teaches him out of his law; and blessed is the man that hungers and thirsts after righteousness. But the appetite of nature is vitiated, it cannot savour the things of God; but spiritual life must have spiritual sustenance; the soul that longs as the prodigal did for divine bread, and he that hungers and thirsts after righteousness are both quickened—the former is sick of husks, and the latter of his own performances. You may call the blessing of life, Gad, for there is a troop behind it.

But it must be confessed that love brings up the rear; "Shall I cause to travail, and not cause to bring forth?" Shall I alarm, awaken, chasten, and quicken, and not cause to bring forth? Shall I tell them, that all that I love I rebuke and chasten, and give them the promised chastisement, but never discover my love to them? No, that be far from me, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Next Sunday

we shear the sheep, the Sunday following is ordinance day, and either this week or next, the M——s come, so that I know not what to say. I would wish when I come to stay three weeks, but who is to preach for me I know not. I will write to B. this day if I can. Tender my love to the family. God bless you all.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXIII.

To Mr. T.

Paddington.

My dear Friend,

Both your epistles came safe to hand, and I thank you kindly for the same. My long silence hath not originated from any displeasure, far from it, but merely for want of time, having been driven to write; have also reprinted one book which was out of print. My son Gad, who for some years back hath been sharply exercised by the chastening hand of God upon him, begins to hold up his head; he told me last Sunday, that the word of God now comes with power, love, and comfort to his heart, and that he now believed that the Lord would most surely save him; I never expect to send you better tidings than these.

Should be heartily glad to see either you or your daughters, whenever you or they choose to come, you are all welcome to such as I have. Tender my love and respects to them both, and accept the same from,

Your much obliged friend and servant in Christ Jesus,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO MR. B.

Paddington, Friday Morning.

My dear Brother,

I WISH grace, mercy, and peace, through Jesus Christ, ever to be with thee. I have been sadly shook with a violent fever, and pains from head to foot; seized I was all at once, and to bed I went, and then to doctoring and nursing, and through the tender and undeserving mercy of my God, am better; and I hope to be in my lawful calling again next Sunday.

When I was last at your house, I dreamed that my house fell down, and at my return was informed it was to be sold; but the price set upon it was so high, that I was compelled to look out

elsewhere: have therefore taken a little farm; do not laugh at this. This little concern was advertised in the papers, and some of my friends went down to see it unknown to me, and would insist upon my undertaking the affair; but I moved heavily and with some reluctance, fearing a state of bankruptcy: however, I am embarked in it, and am watching to see what the event may be. I have had many tossings and strange goings upon my mind about it, and the old adversary hath not been slack nor idle, during my illness; nor could I once say at the expected approach of the devil, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; for carnal reason and unbelief, natural enmity, rebellion, and discontent, all united together, and took part with him.

This is the interest that satan hath got in my foolish heart, these are the members of the old man, who certainly is a most rank Jacobin, an enemy to peace and tranquillity, and an enemy to all order and good government; and all the disaffection in this nation springs from no other source than this. But notwithstanding all these enemies, there were some few Royalists in my heart, which opposed the clamour of all these of Tom Paine's followers. Gratitude sometimes appeared, and brought to my mind many past favours, love-visits, and tokens for good, which would make my bowels move, and my eyes flow with silent and secret tears of love and affection;

but the noise of rebellion in the camp, would soon drown this. Faith said, there is neither unatoned guilt nor unappeased wrath working in your conscience, and you will be most certainly saved, nor have you any doubts about it; but this was prophesying of things to come; this is all true, but it is not the Lord's presence, and therefore I murmured on.

Patience forsook me, submission and resignation lent no assistance, fear only appeared now and then, but interfered very little, humility never once shewed her face; all that remained with me was confidence and hope, and now and then love for past favours would appear a little; but as I supposed myself hardly dealt with, this counteracted all the pleas of love and affection. And here I continue to this day, in a strait betwixt two, pro and con; and I can compare it to nothing else but the Lord standing at my right hand, and satan at my left, contending which shall have the spoil. "To will is present with me," I know how I would fain have it, but the warfare must continue, the Canaanites must dwell in this land to goad our sides, and prick our eyes; no small mortification they are to me, and little strength God knows have I got against them: but enough of this.

The harvest is now in, and you know not how much I long to see your poor father and mother; and I beg they will now come before I go into

the next furnace, for without doubt there will soon be another of some sort or other, heated for me. Do tell them to send a line as soon as convenient, by what coach they come, where, and what day, and at what hour they arrive; and I will send a person to get a coach, to move the luggage, and to be on the spot when the stage comes in. Tender my kind respects and best wishes to the two young ladies, my kindest love to father and mother, and accept the same from,

Your unworthy comrade in the unremitted fight of faith,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXXV.

TO MR. W. B.

I THANK thee, my dearly beloved in the Lord, for the good tidings, as I believe God has kept me in a spirit of prayer, ever since my arrival at B. and I was vexed that no soul for so long a time sent me any tidings, neither about you, nor about poor mother. I even quarrelled with —— in my heart, not knowing that she was gone from B.

However, we poor wretches are still debtors

to grace; nor does he leave us without a witness that he is faithful, nor without a sure token that he is good, which calls aloud for suitable returns of love, of gratitude, and of thankfulness. I bless, and truly thank my most merciful God and Father in Christ, for his goodness to poor mother and you, and I do bless my God that I can say, that I have your whole family in my heart, in every prayer of mine, making request with joy. I have plenty of this work, for last week I had the last dying groans of his Excellency, and I was enabled to wrestle hard for him, and to send him an epistle which he informs me filled first his heart, then the pulpit, and then the flock. I want to wean him, but I cannot; and I do at times think, that he will go sucking to the grave; he is such a dear friend to Moses.

Though he continually curses him, yet every time satan gets him down, off he goes to Horeb, and there he gets the old vail, and then he is lost, and gropes for the wall like the blind, and then comes his last dying speech and confession. These papers come sometimes when the devil has got me by the ear, and then I am like a wild bull in a net, and should most certainly make use of Mrs. Birch, was he present; but God keeps us far enough apart, that there may be none of these Welch battles. I yesterday dropped you a line, informing you that I was going into Kent, where his Excellency sends me word he will

come and meet me, on next Monday evening. God bless thee, and keep thee, so prays

The chiefest of Sinners,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

I ALMOST long to know how my dear friend comes on, whether he gained any thing by trading the last visit, and if there be any breaking out or breaking forth from the prison, from the chains of sin, and from the yoke of bondage, among the people. The ring-straked, spotted, and spangled sheep, are to be the shepherd's hire; so shall the righteousness of the shepherds, answer for them in time to come.

We got home safe, and in good time, and am much attended in the ministry; nor have I had one barren time in the pulpit, since my return, which is not common, and to me it is most wonderful. Bless God I am still longing for an increase in the Lord's harvest, and I have good tidings from O. in Kent, three of whom came to hear me last Lord's Day; and I am fully persuaded that they came not in vain: I am going

to preach there next Wednesday and Thursday evenings, if God permit. O my dearly beloved companion, what debtors are we to free grace. How, how many comply with a few legal convictions, which are attended with no life, no appetite, no relish for the passover, no hunger after righteousness, nor any thirst for the love and favour of God, and therefore get ease and security at the foot of Sinai, and fetch all their hopes and comforts from the law that condemns them; but never, never arise to that evangelical influence, that makes the sabbath of God holy and honourable, Christ precious, and God the delight of the soul.

The only way to attain this is by tracing the footsteps of his providence, observing the work of his hands, and yielding to the dictates and impulses of his most holy and most blessed Spirit; and sure I am that often when I am admiring his works without, my soul is sensibly touched within. If he lays on the rod of affliction, he says to the afflicted, Pray; if he gives joy and gladness, he expects thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. In a joyous frame, he expects blessing; but when in a meek and quiet frame of soul, he requires familiarity, and a holy boldness; for never can a poor believer make so free as when his soul is truly poor and needy. "The poor," says the wise man, "heareth not rebukes;" there is nothing in all God's book against him.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God." True yoke-fellow, adieu.

Ever your's in faith and affection,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MISS B.

My dear Friend,

Your letter has brought me lower than I was, for of late I have been of a sorrowful spirit. The death of your poor Aunt, the sickness of your surviving Aunt and Uncle, and the often infirmities of poor M. is sorrow upon sorrow. But our dear Jesus lives, and his grace is endless health and eternal life, nor shall hell itself ever deprive us of this. We love one another now, and this is the bond of the covenant, the bond of union, and the bond of all perfectness; and this bond every sharp trial both increases and strengthens. Death shall not dissolve it, and eternity itself will only perfect it.

How did my soul cleave to you, and others of my dear fraternity, when this trouble first came upon me; how did I, and still do loathe this malicious and envious world: I comforted myself to think I was old, and should soon see an

end. Nothing, look which way you will, is to be seen but lust, pride, and every vanity, and a tinder box within, inflamed at every spark, and setting on fire the whole frame of nature. "But this, this is the will of him that sent me; of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." Our bodies and souls are God's work, and given to Christ, and not one hair of our head shall ever perish. But the old man, sin, is the corruption of our nature; "All flesh hath corrupted its way."

Satan corrupted us from the original holiness that we had of God. To purge us from this by blood, to counteract the remains of it by grace, to change our vile bodies at last, and to fashion them like the glorious body of Christ, is the work in hand. This good work, my dear girls and sisters, is begun, and will be carried on, and be perfected in the day of Christ, when the body rises; this is what David means, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the works of thine own hands," Psal. cxxxviii. 8. Sure I am, and I feel it now, that every cross and sore trial mortifies sin, and deadens the soul to it; the effect of this, meekness, humility, and self-abasement, searching, seeking, crying, praying; and after this faith, hope, and love rise up, with new strength, life, and vigour.

The devil hates the furnace, his sweet morsels

are distelished, when the soul is in sackcloth; and crying and praying to God, is a scourge for the devil. I never read of any dying or perishing under the rod, under sharp exercises, or in the purging furnace. Job's children were all feasting, when the wind smote the house, and killed them all. God bless you both is, and will be, the prayer of,

Your loving Brother,

W. H. S. S.

FINIS.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

GLEANINGS OF THE VINTAGE;

OR

LETTERS

TO THE SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST;

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE.

PART VII.

There shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. Isa. xxiv. 13.

The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it. Isa. lxv. 8.

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1813.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THE first letter of this Seventh Part of the 'Gleanings of the Vintage,' was written about the same period of my Father's life as the first five letters in the Sixth, and was addressed to the same person; at which time it is clearly manifested that he carried coals. It should have appeared with those; but when I copied them for the press, I was somewhat divided in my mind whether I would insert it or not. I have, however, since come to a conclusion upon it; and though it may not please every reader, still there is such a characteristic simplicity, and marked attention to the welfare of souls, displayed in it, that I have judged it worthy of a place among his other letters.

E. HUNTINGTON.

High Street,
Nov. 30, 1813.

LETTERS

WRITTEN BY THE LATE

Rev. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

TO MR. S. W.

Thames Ditton.

My dear Souls,

I THIS day received your letter with joy, and give you thanks for the same. I have been twice to Woking since my brother P. left me. The time before last, coming home, I was most dreadfully tempted indeed; but the blessed Jesus helped me up again by calling me to visit an old man, whom I had once seen before. When I came I found him in dreadful horror, and calling on God, and when I began to tell him how he felt himself, he found it would do for him, and being thick of hearing, he pulled off his hat and cap, and laid his aged ear to hear the word, and soon was melted down in tears. I left him smiling. Pray for him.

The last Sunday I thought to be at Mitcham; I intended to go last Saturday to Camberwell,

and Mitcham, and Ewell, and Epsom, and Horsham; but the frost broke, and I was called to Woking. I found heaven on earth in my journey. I went weeping, bearing precious seed, God grant I may return, and bring my sheaves with me, Amen. When I came I was gladly received. One of our sisters was very ill, and her husband is a pharisee and an enemy, and his daughter likewise opposed her mother, though she often came to hear me. Well, I went to see her, and the father was at home, and behaved very civil; but when I began to talk he heard awhile, but soon withdrew, being a lover of darkness, and therefore a hater of light. I spent some time in prayer; and the daughter being convicted of being an enemy to her mother, cried out, and Mr. H. kept her company in weeping; I had much ado to pacify her, and my bowels yearned towards them; so I left them in the spirit of meekness: God grant that we may meet again where we shall cry no more, Amen, and do you say Amen to it.

I likewise visited a poor cripple, that had long desired to see this William, the parson, and he seemed all ear; the Lord affect his heart, Amen. The forenoon and afternoon service, I was happy, but before the evening in trouble. The clerk's wife and daughter seemed convinced, and the clerk wanted to hear, but was afraid to come openly though desirous; so, like Nicodemus, he

came in the night, and was shut in a room just against the wall where I stood to speak. I thought of him, and though in chains just before, God gave me great power and liberty indeed; God grant he may, like Nicodemus, come forth to the light, and beg of God the Father, his crucified Son, for his soul's salvation, Amen.

In the morning we awaked about three o'clock, and the Lord was with me indeed, and we sung, and prayed, and parted in love, O bless the Lord for it. My master has got a new bargeman, and one morning master gave him and me a breakfast together alone, at Christmas. I began to speak to him about God in the spirit of meekness, since that, God has given me his ear; pray God to conquer his heart. This night he blessed me, and tells me he begins to feel, God grant it may be Christ crucified in his heart, Amen, Lord Jesus. He tells my master he loves William, God grant he may love Christ. Master has given him leave to go to Woking with me, O that he may go to heaven with me, Amen. You tell me you are tempted by the devil; obey God's voice, give all you have to him, and then you are not your own, you are bought with a price, and God is your wall of salvation.

Praise him for his wonderful creation. Praise him for his work of works in sinner's salvation. Praise him for his dear Son. Praise him for his precious blood. Praise him for his Holy Spirit.

Praise him for his matchless grace. Praise him for his precious love. Praise him for his powerful faith. Praise him for his blessed hope. Praise him for discovering guilt. Praise him for salvation from it.

Praise him for a quiet spirit. Praise him for a broken heart. Praise him for a tender conscience. Praise him for holy desires. Praise him for a spiritual thirst. Praise him for a renewed will. Praise him for his marvellous light. Praise him for your heavenly views. Praise him for the hope of glory.

Praise him for engaged strength. Praise him for a precious soul. Praise him for his grace to save it. Praise him for his power to keep it. Praise him for his watchful eye. Praise him for his guardian angels. Praise him for your holy wars. Praise him for your perfect weakness.

Praise him for his word of promise. Praise him for his humbling rod. Praise him for both law and gospel. Praise him for his mercy on us. Praise him for all humbling trials. Praise him for instruction from them. Praise him as your Lord and God. Praise him for the spirit of meekness.

Let all mankind from north to south, praise my God with heart and mouth. Praise the Lord, ye saints of light, praise my God both day and night. Praise him for your life and

breath, praise my Christ both heaven and earth. Praise him for a spiritual ear, praise him for his godly fear. Praise him for his humiliation, praise him in his exaltation. Praise him in all the hymns you sing, praise him your prophet, priest, and king. Let every tongue, in every head, praise the Judge of quick and dead. Praise the Lord from pole to pole, praise him that saved my helpless soul. Praise the Lord from coast to coast, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

LETTER II.

TO MISS E. B.

THE last time I heard from my dear friend, she was in a very flourishing state, comfortably enlarged, and somewhat confirmed and established; at such seasons they can reign as kings, with the toil of labourers. But these flourishing seasons are of short duration, and after a sweet banquet the appetite is but the keener when fasting days come on: "Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?" No, it is impossible, but the time is sure

to come, "when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days," Mark ii. 19, 20. That which sharpens the appetite is, the sweetness of his presence, and the bitterness that succeeds upon his departure, which makes the soul passionately long for his return; the days will come, when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

But this going and coming not only leads us to distinguish between feasting and fasting, but between the old man and the new; it also makes us more and more acquainted with the Lord himself, whose presence is the better distinguished by his long absence, the more minutely observed, and the more thankfully acknowledged. All this may be seen in the spouse; her Lord's long absence had provoked her to such raging jealousy that her apprehension became so quick, that she knew him both by his voice, and by the stroke of his hand; "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me," as if she was the only one that he sought after. It also leads us to distinguish between the old man and the new; the new man, so called by Paul, is by Peter called the divine nature; and elsewhere Paul calls the old and new man, flesh and spirit: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," Gal. v. 17.

Now every visit which the Lord pays to his

poor children, is to preserve, revive, enliven, and strengthen the good work of grace; "Thy visitation," says Job, "hath preserved my spirit," Job x. 12; for, "Thou hast granted me life and favour," and visited me to keep that life and favour from falling to decay. This is what David alludes to, when he says, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the work of thine own hands." To this Christ alludes, when upon every visit he says, "Behold my reward is with me, and my work before me;" every visit therefore is to renew this new man: "The inner man," says Paul, "is renewed day by day." Hence, if we observe upon every appearance of the Lord's presence, the heart is enlarged, the soul refreshed, faith gets active, hope abounds, love draws, meekness softens, contrition affords a pleasing smart; he deals kindness by his countenance, and recalls former miscarriages, and coyly refuses his tenderness upon a deep sense of unworthiness, and reflections of former unbelief, impatience, and hard thoughts of his long delay; this fills the soul with true humility, and self-loathing, under which much nearness, boldness, freedom of access, great liberty, and strong persuasions, and comfortable claims are granted; our interest appears clear, and our evidences bright, and love appears perfect; and we resolve,

and fully intend in all future periods, to quit ourselves like men.

But, alas, when Christ has revived his work, and is gone, then comes satan to stir up every branch of his dominion, every loyal subject to his interest, and every corruption, or every faculty, power, or affection of our hearts, which he, by the fall of man, has corrupted, and vitiated, and alienated from God. Not only unbelief, hardness, rebellion, enmity, pride, and revenge, but every natural inclination to evil; this is the old man, and these two will war, as long as we live in this vale of tears, this enchanting and ensnaring spot, and as long as we are in this body of sin and death: thus our Lord's visits and absence distinguish between sin and grace. And this my dear friend must expect to be the daily task of bearing the cross, till the cross give way to the crown, and tribulation ends in eternal tranquillity.

I have for this fortnight back had a bad cold, fever, cough, hoarseness, and much shortness of breath, but am somewhat better. I have long lived in expectation of seeing my old companion in travail, and his two daughters, but all hope on that ground has been destroyed, on which account I send these few scraps. The heavens bless my poor friends, and all at the Bower, is the daily prayer of,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

The Cabin. Monday.

ONCE more I come to enquire after the health, the wealth, and the prosperity of my dear friend; knowing that there is balm still in Gilead, or among the witnesses of God, and a physician there, that is in every purged conscience; and near to every broken heart, in order to save every contrite spirit: "His reward is with him." Every band for binding up, every cordial for reviving drooping spirits, every bitter ingredient for strengthening the stomach, and promoting appetite; oil and myrrh, milk and honey, wine and spices. "All his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces," all, all, for our use, for our good, and for our growth.

"His reward is with him, and his work before him;" and what is that? "From all their filthiness, and from all their idols," says Christ, "I will cleanse them;" "I will clothe thee with change of raiment," Zech. iii. 4. And he shall feed them, and keep them as a shepherd does his flock; this is his charge, and he is the good Shep-

herd, and will be faithful, tender, and watchful, for he that keepeth Israel never slumbers nor sleeps, Psal. cxxi. 4. We are God's choice, and his own purchase, and he will lose nothing of his own, no, not an hair of the head shall perish, for these are all numbered. And if matters are so, will he ever forget our persons, or once let our names slip from his divine mind, or be banished from his memory? "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt," when thou art in such safe, and such powerful hands.

I daily remember you all in my poor, imperfect prayers, for I love, and I long to see the kingdom of Christ enlarged; and I have some satisfaction on this head. Let nothing damp thee, to slacken thy diligence; "The diligent soul shall be made fat;" it is bold faith, and strong faith, that gives glory to God, which maintains its hold, and repeats its claims, suits, and pleas, when heaven and earth seem to combine against us. I have this day sent a scrap to poor Mary. God bless my dear friend, so prays

Her most affectionate,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

The Doctor to his Little One, sendeth Greeting, with perfect peace and at such a time.

THIS is Saturday, and I have been on the wings of vain imagination five or six times to B. I have lately, in order to prevent my going out of the chapel on Sunday nights, when I am so hot, had a new bed put up in the study at the chapel, and there I have slept for some time. On Thursday night last, being Christmas eve, I went there to bed at seven o'clock; I waked up at midnight, and chewed over my Christmas-day text, and after this dropped off again, and into the land of Nod I went. I dreamed that I was on a large barren common, and a person stepped up to me and told me, that was the way to the mill; I set off down a descent, and soon came to the mill, and something told me that there were none in that place but what would be glad to see me. The mill stood very pleasant, and before it a beautiful stone building, and at the front of that a delightful river, and one lady walking by it, who looked at me, smiled and curtseyed. I said, You have been at great expence here, she said she had, and I awoke. I

thought of the two grinding at the mill, the one taken, the other left, and of Peter's building of living stones, and of John's river of the water of life, and then sunk down into the land of forgetfulness again, and behold another dream.

I dreamed that I was in a very large, old, and ruinous house, but it had pleasant gardens; in this house there was you, your father, mother, Mary, and John, and we all walked about for some time; at last all sat down in a large room, and I was to wash the feet of you all: I was to begin with you, then your father who sat next, then your mother, then Mary, and then John. I began, and washed your's quite clean, and when I had done, you looked hard at me, and said, I think I have got some spots about my nose; I looked, and there were two spots upon one cheek, one upon the other, and two little ones upon your upper lip. I got those off the same way the Saviour healed the blind man, I spit upon my handkerchief, and rubbed them all off, and I thought I never saw you look so cheerful in my life. I then began upon your father, but by the motion of my arms in rubbing, I awoke myself, before I had finished the work that I was to do.

I thought of our Lord's washing the disciples' feet, and of Peter's desire to have the same to be done to his hands and his head, and of our Lord's answer to him; and then I thought of this

text, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet," John xiii. 14. Then I considered what that of washing one another's feet should mean, and likewise what is meant by the feet. Those who believe in Christ are pardoned, justified, and sanctified, and therefore complete in Christ, and of course clean every whit, and need no more washing, save to wash the feet; which signifies the whole of our conversation through life in the course of our pilgrimage, in which we often offend in thought, word, or deed, and which disquiets the mind, disturbs our peace, offends our conscience, weakens our faith, encourages satan, and brings on the rod of God. "What I do thou knowest not now," says Jesus to Simon, "but thou shalt know hereafter," John xiii. 7; which was fulfilled when Peter fell, then he wanted his feet washed, for he was down, and his mouth too, for he had cursed and swore.

But what can be meant by washing one another's feet, did the apostles ever do this? I believe not. How does the Lord purge and save us? "With the washing of water, by the word," Ephes. v. 26; this is the way that he sanctifies and cleanses his church: that water is the renewing of the Holy Ghost, called the washing of regeneration, Titus iii. 5. But then why is it

called, the washing of water by the word? Because God gives testimony to the word of his grace, by accompanying it with the Holy Spirit; the word comes in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, 1 Thess. i. 5; therefore to preach comforting, and encouraging words to fallen saints, backsliding souls, and to such as have offended, the Holy Spirit applying the word, pardon and peace is renewed, and the feet are afresh washed again.

By the cheeks of my little one, I understand the heart and conscience, for when these are clean we can lift up our face without spot to God, Job xi. 15; but when these are foul, I am bowed down, I am so troubled I cannot look up. The spot on my little one's lip, betoken some mutterings; your lips have muttered perverseness, saith the prophet; and of himself at conversion he says, "I am a man of unclean lips." Thus has the Lord told me what thou hast been at, and I was employed to rub it all off, and who knows but the living water may attend this epistle, and do the work of the whole dream; I never understood these things of washing the feet so clear before. After my dreams, I had a glorious time in the pulpit, and after that good news from ——. I have hope of five poor soul there. About three weeks before Christmas, now twenty-eight years ago, I was brought forth the second time,

on which I thought with many tears. I send this to B. expecting you are altogether there. My most cordial love to father, mother, Mary, and John.

God bless you all,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

BEING returned from the journey, I am coming to enquire how my beloved friend does. I see I have not laboured in vain in ———, some have shook themselves from the dust, and loosed the bands of their neck; while others look out of obscurity, and struggle to come forth out of their holes: some hang their harps on the willows, and two or three go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

But how is it with my old companion in travail? I have no doubt but her mind is often buffeted, her understanding beclouded, her peace disquieted, her resting place disturbed, her unbelief strengthened, and every good thought scattered; but after all, this is no more than the devil's works, moving our inbred corruptions: and this we know is the war that God himself

has called us to, and Christ is the captain of all these forces, and of our salvation; and we are to be more than conquerors through him that hath loved us. All the devil's malice is against Christ, and faith in him, but this is not attended with the sword of justice; no sting of unpardoned guilt, no rebukes with flames of fire, no piercing curses from the holy law, no arrows from God's quiver, no vindictive wrath reflected from God's anger, no black despair, no evident token of perdition, no dread of damnation.

Nay, so far from this, we find that after every onset is over, that the Lord comes in and revives the work, gives fresh strength, repairs all our losses, recruits our ammunition, and gives fresh fortitude to renew the war; and surely those soldiers fight well who are thus honoured, encouraged, and led on in the field of action again and again. And sure I am that there would not be any renewing of our strength, no more encouragement, no more visits, no smiles, no reviving cordials, no good cheer; nor would he ever lead us forth again, if he did not approve of the war, and of our conduct in the war: nor do we fight and beat the air. We have gotten fear, life, light, peace, rest, faith, hope, love, and meekness already in possession, which are the first fruits; and when we are so bewildered as to lose sight of all these, a thousand worlds would not purchase our share in these things, even then.

when we have nothing left but the bare remembrance of them. Keep on, the Lord of Hosts is both our Commander and our armour, and we are no more than mere machines in this war. Kind love to Mary, and accept the same.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

Cricklewood, Edgeware Road.

My dearly Beloved in the Lord,

YOUR's came safe to hand, and I was glad to hear of the revival of the good work in thee; and indeed it is no more than what I firmly believed would be the case when I set out. God will not contend for ever, nor will he be always wrath; "His anger endures but a moment, in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," Psal. xxx. 5. Our souls are naturally wedded to the law; a self-righteous spirit which is natural to us, often betrays us into a labyrinth of bondage, hence the apostle intimates, that there is a necessity of being divorced from the law, by the condemning sentence thereof. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye

also are become dead to the law, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 4.

A legal spirit betrays us into slavish fear, and slavish fear, which the law communicates, influenceth the soul, and mingleth wrath and terror with it; it gendereth to bondage, Gal. iv. 24: and the motions of sin which are by the law discovered, irritated, and stirred up, such as enmity, unbelief, and rebellion, work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death, Rom. vii. 5. Hence my dear little one may see the need of a divorce from the law, because it can give no life, and therefore under it dead fruits and nothing else can be brought forth. But the bond of the new covenant is love, and the bond of the old covenant is wrath, hence it is said to work wrath; and as it binds the sinner over to punishment, so the poor criminal is kept in tormenting fear of punishment, and bowed down to the meditations of terror.

Unpardoned guilt, and the law's curse, always go together; and the curse and wrath of a broken law hold the sinner fast; nor can he ever get free, but by the blood of the Lamb: "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," 1 Cor. xv. 56. Faith eyes the atonement and satisfaction of Christ, and deals with his blood for pardon; and when applied, "By the blood of

thy covenant," says the Father, "I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water. Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope," Zech. ix. 11, 12. This is God's command, that Christ's prisoners of hope turn their eyes to him, who is their high tower, strong hold, and safeguard, Nahum i. 7.

I have informed my little one, that the bond of the covenant of grace is love; a covenant is a bargain made between two persons or more; God's covenant was a bargain made between God and his son, in which bargain God promised and fixed his free love upon us, and ordained us to life and glory. Christ on his part agreed to take our nature, and die to redeem us from sin, and from the curse that we were under, by obeying the law, and dying in our room and stead; and this was the debt which the surety paid down. The bond of the covenant was, that God promised upon the satisfaction of Christ to turn his wrath from us, and to love us freely, and to continue us for ever in his love; hence he sends us out of the pit, and discharges us, and likewise chastens us as a proof of his love to us; and after he has caused us to pass under this chastening rod, he brings us into the bond of the covenant, that is, he reveals his love to us. This love is to cast out the fear and torment peculiar to the old covenant, that the blessings of the better covenant may come into our souls, namely,

life and peace, Mal. ii. 5. Life and peace in the new covenant, are the fruits and effects of pardon and justification, as guilt and death were the fruits and effects of condemnation by the old covenant.

Let my little one read and ponder these things over, and let her observe, that by the bond of love which God fixed on us in Christ, and which we feel when we are enabled to exercise faith on the Son of God, is the bond of union between Christ and us; hence he is flesh of our flesh, by his incarnation, and we are one spirit with him, being joined to him in love. And as the covenant of promise is ratified by the death of Christ, it stands fast, having the unchangeable love of God, the oath of God, the promise of God, the faithfulness and truth of God, the blood of Christ, and the witness of the Spirit for its basis.

God, that we might be safe, has made Christ our everlasting Father, husband, and elder brother; and has appointed him in our nature to be the judge of quick and dead, that he may avenge us of our enemies, and reward us with the kingdom and glory which he hath predestinated us to, and prepared for us. It is our heavenly Father's will that none of Christ's little ones should perish, but have everlasting life, and be raised up at the last day; and Christ who is our lover, and the faithful and true witness, must

reign till this is done; "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Have been much tempted and exercised lately, and am but poorly in body, but hope ever to remain,

Dear little one,

Your's, most affectionately in the best of bonds,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER VII.

TO THE SAME.

Cricklewood, Friday Morning.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,

GRACE and peace be multiplied, for it is God's most faithful promise, that those which be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God, or as the New Testament explains it, they shall grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The first grace planted in the heart is fear, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and though this fear has at first an angry God for its object; and therefore slavery attends it, and we tremble at his word, and every sin

pierces us, and conscience being authorised and commissioned to act against us, yet this serves to hedge up our way with thorns, so that we cannot find any pleasure in our old paths as usual; this makes us sick of going astray. "Before I was afflicted I went astray," says the Psalmist, "but now have I kept thy word," Psal. cxix. 67.

The second grace is faith; this persuades the mind, and by some distant views of the love of God, it draws the heart from off all trust in self, to confide in the mercy of the mediator; it sets the soul to call upon God with a peradventure we may be heard; it credits God as most true in all he says, and mixes itself with whatever we read or hear, and makes us feel the same, whether it be reproof or rebuke, comfort or encouragement. And as it gathers strength, it applies the promises, and leads the heart to believe that greater things are yet to be done in us; and having life in it, or its being a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ, it is the substance of things hoped for, or eternal life already in the soul; and the evidence of things not seen; for it assures the mind of salvation, and that assurance, like an evidence or witness, silences all gainsayers.

The third grace is hope, and hope is founded on faith, for what I believe God has given, that I hope to enjoy, and live in expectation of it; therefore hope respects something future, some-

thing good, something promised, and something desirable. God gives this grace; through Christ we hope in God who is faithful, and expect upon the warrant of his promise, the glory that is to be revealed. Fear counteracts presumption; faith guards us from the curse of a broken law; and hope forbids despair.

The fourth grace is peace; this informs us of reconciliation and friendship with God, and is the fruit and effect of pardon, and of justification, and a sure sign of union with Christ; "In the world you shall have tribulation, but in me you shall have peace." This is one blessing of the covenant, a fruit of the Spirit, and one blessed ingredient of the heavenly glory; "They shall enter into peace," Isai. lvii. 2. Peace is a calm within, when there are storms without; and is an eternal cessation of arms with God, when at war with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

5. Patience. The business of this grace is to keep us waiting for what we expect, it forbids hastiness, peevishness, fretfulness, turbulence, and disquietude, and is intended to compose the mind in a sea of troubles, to keep us waiting God's pleasure, and God's time for our deliverance; "In patience possess ye your souls. But there shall not an hair of your head perish," Luke xxi. 18, 19. "The Lord," the Spirit, "direct your hearts into the love of God,

and into a patient waiting for Christ," 2 Thess. ii. 3, 5.

6. Meekness. This grace is intended to ease the burthened mind, to assuage the grief of the heart, and to vent the heavy troubles of the soul by contrition, compunction, brokenness of heart, and by a flood of tears; otherwise when grief and distress fill the soul, it would vent itself in rebellion, murmuring, rage, and fury, and distress would come out of the mouth by muttering perverseness, as always is the case of those whose souls are filled with grief and desperate sorrow, Isa. xvii. 11; sorrow that has no remedy, sorrow that has nothing but despair and desperation for its object. But when the heart of God's children are pregnant with grief, either the old man or the new man will give it vent: if the former it is in anger, and rebellion; if the latter it is in tears, prayers, and contrition.

Moses was the meekest man on earth, and almost in every sore trial he falls on his face and weeps to God; but now and then it was not so, and then it is said, "Moses was wroth." Again, he says to God, "Have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child; and if thou deal thus with me, kill me I pray thee out of hand, and let me not see my wretchedness." Again, "Hear now ye rebels; must we fetch water for you out of this rock?"

"They provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." "They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord; so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes," Psal. cvi. 33, 16, 32; for he was not suffered to enter the promised land. Hence the Lord's exhortation, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls;" and Paul's exhortation is, "Follow after righteousness, meekness, patience, charity, with all them that call upon God out of a pure heart."

7. Love. This grace is called the bond of all perfectness, it is the fulfilment of all law, and the glory of the everlasting gospel; and every blessing flows from it, even Christ himself: "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son;" that we might live through him. The Holy Ghost sheds this love abroad in our hearts, through Christ Jesus, and it disarms the soul of all that slavish fear, and bondage, and torment, which is peculiar to servants in the flesh; it casts out doubts, and all that legal bondage that debases the soul to a mean, low, and base disposition, which is but eye service, or service extorted by the fears of punishment. It enriches and ennobles the mind, it leads the soul to be satisfied and delighted in the favour, worship, and service of God; and by this cord of the

love of God, God says, he draws us, I have drawn them with the cords of love as with the bands of a man; by this he allures, wooes, wins, and powerfully constrains us with a sweet omnipotence, and with an omnipotent sweetness, to follow hard after him. All other graces but this will pass through a change; fear will terminate in fortitude, faith in fruition, hope in full enjoyment, patience into eternal placidity, meekness in endless joy—but charity never faileth, but is always the same.

I have written these few scraps to entertain thee, and to keep thy mind heavenly, knowing thou hast not the opportunity of hearing the word, which is no small mortification to those that have an appetite for the bread of life; but God promises to hear the prayer of the poor and needy that seek water, when there is none, and that he will not forsake them. There is a heavy cloud hangs over our head, but the greatest part apprehend no danger, but their security is a bad sign to me. Stand fast my dear friend, and cleave close to thy God, and remember how great things he has done for you in calling you out of this sinful world, and calling you to the fellowship of his dear Son; it is his will that you should remember your Creator in the days of your youth, while the evil days come not. Mr. B. at B. determines to preach no more in the church, but

is looking out for a chapel. Give my love to Aunt.

Your willing Servant in Christ Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

The Cabin, Tuesday Morning, 4 o'Clock.

LAST night just before going into the pulpit, poor James brought in thine epistle to me, with the good tidings of father and mother being better, which quite dissolved my soul in love to my God, who is so kind as to listen to the pitiful entreaties of poor rebellious mortals. My heart was filled with love, admiration, and pious grief, but I could not pour it out, though my heart was hot, and in holy motion for a thank-offering.

After service came in one from S. another from M. another who lives in Town, and this morning two more are coming, so that I ordered my fire to be lighted at four o'clock, which it was, and the offering abode with me till opportunity offered. I can say with truth that a meek, submissive, praying frame, has abode with me ever since I left B. and yesterday was a whole day of prayer. I was so grieved at seeing poor father and mother

so ill, and so low, and I thought of your cold collation which satan would prepare at your return, in order to quench every spark that came from the altar of burnt-offering, and therefore put up innumerable petitions on that head; and what I said and thought when I set out for B. is true, that God would do more in answer to prayer, than all medicines had done.

A praying frame was given me as soon as I saw your mother, and my heart abode full for some time before I could pour it out, and I pursued it all the time I was there; and though I saw them little better I was not discouraged, but persevered, and now I set to my seal that God is true. And now God requires many grateful acknowledgments and thank-offerings, and this I have found by late experience establishes the answer granted. Without this, matters will go back again; do you observe this, "Call upon me in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," mark that. Sure I am that neither afflictions, diseases, devils, nor sinners, can stand before the united force of the camp of the saints, when the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, and all prayer from the armoury of God are brought forth against them. When I call upon God my enemies shall be turned back; this I know, for God is for me, Psal. lvi. 9; mark that.

I have made up my mind, should God spare my life, to spend one week at the new house at

Christmas, in order to consecrate the new pulpit which I intend to have made for the new house, and if possible will preach there on Christmas-day; for I know that poor souls in the best frames will wither without the word, we know not the worth till we know the want. But my refuge, my hiding-place, my only resource is a throne of grace. O Betsy, if thou didst but know the ten-thousandth part of the benefits of this throne, and of the mediation and intercession of Christ, and of the fulness of grace that is in him, and of the delight that God takes in the prayer of his people, and of the aid and assistance that the Spirit gives us therein, and of the gains, profits, and increase gained thereby; sick or sorry, miserable or merry, high or low, dead or alive, thou wouldst pay thy constant visits there.

Perhaps there are few in the land of the living that carry on more trade at this divinely Royal Exchange, than the much-despised Coal-heaver, and my soul knows the immortal and eternal gains. It keeps up the life of godliness, and when the soul is lively it is contented and happy, "For godliness with contentment is great gain," mark that. And now let my poor little one observe the sweet motions of the heavenly dove; when troubles appear he will fill the mouth with petitions and the heart with sorrow, that is, for prayer. When deliverances appear, and our worthiness is considered, meekness operates, that

is for thank-offerings; when high joys spring up, that is for praise, called the sacrifices of joy, and declaring his works with rejoicing; when corruptions rise, and sins prevail, it is for confession.—Mark these things and observe them.

Last Sunday was ordinance day. I have worked very hard lately, nor have I experienced any frowns, desertions, rebukes, nor reproofs, since I returned, which is often the case, but have been much indulged with access to my God. Read this to poor mother with my love.

God bless thee,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

Cricklewood, Edgeware Road.

Dear Betsy,

I DID intend and much wished for a private walk with thee across the field, to have enquired a little how the best of causes went on, and whether the noblest work under heaven prospered in thee; but the weather proved unfavourable. But the Doctor and his friend can say what few young lovers can say, and that is, that our love is from above, and our union shall never be dissolved, for

we are brother and sister in the noblest ties, and kindred souls in the eternal affections of God. My soul loves none but such, however kind, however liberal, however agreeable, however handsome. I can always find my spirit dissolve, melt down, run together, mingle with, cement to, and unite with, those in the furnace, those in soft contrition, those in sorrow after God, those in gospel simplicity, those in humility, and those of a teachable and tractable spirit. These will crawl into my heart, and steal away one corner or other of it; and to tell thee all the truth, my dear Betsy kept a slice when I left Gasson's Bower. But far be it from me to bring a charge of theft against thee, knowing that thou art willing to live honestly, and must live so, for conscience will not suffer it to be otherwise. We will call it an exchange, for a bit of her heart was willingly spared to go to town with me—this is no robbery.

Fear not, Betsy, "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." This is the threefold cord that shall never be broken. It is the bond of God the Father's love, displayed in the gift and revelation of Christ to the preacher; this cord by the preacher is stretched out and another feels it, and receives the messenger for the sake of the message, and by receiving the sent, he receives Christ the sender, and by receiving Christ he receives the Father that sent him: and then truly

we have fellowship both with the Father and the Son. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light," and if we walk in the light, then have we fellowship one with another, 1 John i. 7.

Thus are our souls bound up by God the Father in the bond of his eternal love with Christ, and all that are thus bound up shall live, hence we are said to be bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord Jesus Christ our God. Love and life are inseparably connected together; if God circumcise our heart to love him, it is that we may live, "And we know that we are passed from death to life because we love the brethren." I can truly say that the first child that ever God called by me, I found more love to, than to all in the world beside; and I was much frightened and terrified at it, and satan tried me sorely about it, because the object was a woman; and to shun the snare as the cavilling devil suggested it to me, I would hardly suffer the poor creature to come to my house, or even to speak to me, which almost broke her heart. But soon after God called her husband, and I found the same love to him, this discovered satan's snare and his lie, and led me to an unctuous experience of this text, "Ye are taught of God to love one another," 1 Thess. iv. 9. Surely none can lay nearer my heart than your poor father and his family, yea, every one of them; nor do I forget you in my poor imperfect prayers one day in the year; but this I do not

mention that there is any reliance to be put on my prayers, but to let you know that your family lies near my heart, for many people have more confidence in my poor prayers than I have myself, and think God will hear me for them, when I cannot believe that he will grant me the least request, so strong at times is my unbelief.

I beg, dear Betsy, that no temptations may lead you to believe, that any one fiery dart of satan hath ever been hurled at thee, but such as is common to man. We hang in an even balance, for God weighs both men and their actions, yea, saith the wise man, he weigheth the spirits, Prov. xvi. 2; and we rise and fall as the Spirit operates, or ceases to operate. Corruption entered the heart of Eve by her faith in satan's lie; grace enters the heart by faith in God's truth. When God withdraws the light of his countenance, satan comes, and the soul sinks; like a robber he comes with violence, and we become hasty, pettish, and peevish. He stirs up confusion and we appear a riddle, a mystery; he vails the understanding, and the good work is hid; he spreads a dismal gloom over the soul, and an army of terrors surround us, or dreadful things are expected; then he calls up carnal reason, or unbelief, and when these work, he influences us with his own sensations, enmity to God, malice, rebellion, and desperation, blasphemy and madness, and sometimes operates as an unclean, and

awfully foul spirit. These names he bears, and and by these things the very workings of the mind of devils may be known. At other times he comes changed, and fills us with self-pity, and the pleasing things of flesh and blood, but all against God. Believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart.

When God shines the veil is rent, love disperses the gloom, peace succeeds confusion, meekness follows upon hastiness, sorrow is exchanged for rebellion, and sympathy for the Lord instead of enmity. Long have I gone up and down in this balance, and here I am to this day, nor will times ever be better with me; every time the prince of this world cometh, he is sure to find something in me to stir up and work upon as his allies; and nothing but death will ever cure, or cleanse me of them. But the whole work of grace remains with me, all God's work shall outlive the spawn of satan, "Grace shall reign." If we fall it raises us up, if we backslide it restores us, if we get dead it quickens us, if sin gets the mastery it undermines it, if we contract guilt, Christ's love and our sorrow disperse it, and if we stand fast it is God's grace keeps us; if we get shut up, grace lets us out, if into chains, grace makes us free again. God's eternal love, which is the fountain of all grace, shall reign through the obedience of Christ unto eternal life.

As sure as ever any fiery trial comes upon thee,

so sure will the Holy Spirit give thee some hint, or item of it before it comes, or else alarm thee to fear, to look out, or to expect something as coming on, to prepare thee to receive it, without being overmuch alarmed and dismayed at him. "Behold," says God to Moses, "I come unto thee in thick darkness." "The thing that I greatly feared is fallen upon me," says Job, "and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me," Job iii. 25. "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me," says Paul, Acts xx. 23. Let Betsy watch, and she will see something of this attend her, for God speaks once, yea twice, but man perceiveth it not.

I am at present very low in body, and have not preached since last Lord's day, am so weak inwardly; and the doctor seems to have done me little good, though I have been taking medicine six days. I am to finish my course in a tottering tabernacle, death is to work in me but life in others; I am to die daily, and my outward man is to decay by piecemeal, but my labour is not to be diminished; and were it not for my family, and those I love in the truth, I should fetch in all my comforts from the grave; I am truly sick of this world, and of the uncertainty of all things in it. I pity the young ones that are in the world, for spiritual famine is before them, and

hypocrites and hypocrisy abound, and the fan must come on. I have passed under various changes this week, but this joy and bitterness, rebellion and submission, temptations and consolations, smiles and frowns, visits and desertions, the pulpit and the pillory, will have an end some time. And surely whenever I join the palm-branch company above, it may be said of me as of all the rest, that I came through great tribulation, more by far than any poor wretch that hath appeared on the earth in a profession in my day. Dear Betsy, God bless thee, and keep thee near to himself through this vain life, that thou mayest escape the corruptions of the world, and the wrath to come. So prays,

Thine affectionate Friend, Brother, and
Servant in Christ Jesus,

WM. HUNTINGTON, S.S.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

The Cabin, Tuesday Morning, Four o'Clock.

My dear Friend,

YOUR's came to hand last night, and I was glad to hear you are well, as through mercy I am at present. I had a good day on Sunday last, and a comfortable time last night, God is good to poor unworthy me, and to the poor flock which he has sent me to feed. Let us, my dearly beloved in the Lord, covet earnestly the best gifts, for this God bids us to do. Elisha begged that a double portion of God's spirit might rest upon him, and he obtained his suit; and Jabez prayed that God's hand might be with him, that he would bless him indeed, that he would enlarge him, and keep him from evil that it might not grieve him, and God granted him his request. Solomon craved wisdom, and his petition so pleased the Lord that he granted him wisdom, and told him that he had given him that which he had not asked, namely, riches and honour, as none never had before him.

Jacob wrestled for a blessing, and God's blessing is everlasting life, and God styles himself

the God of Jacob, but he is not the God of the dead but of the living, says Christ, which shews that Jacob is alive with God. Moses prayed, that God's presence might go with him, and that he might shew him his way, and this he obtained. God told him, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." These men, my dear girl, coveted the best gifts, even spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and I am fully persuaded that you are not ignorant of these things, nor of the glorious and eternal worth of them. These are the things which alone can make the soul happy in life and death, and without these things life is vanity, and death a misery. A form of godliness without the power leaves us without God and without hope, but not so fares the believer in the Son of God; the just man shall live by his faith, and the end of faith is the salvation of the soul, says Peter, a blessed end. Solomon says, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death."

Remember my dear little one, that we cannot love God unless we believe in Christ, nor can God love us out of Christ, so says the Saviour; "The Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from God," John xvi. 27. To believe in Christ, gives us an interest in his death, in his blood and righteousness, in his sacrifice and

satisfaction, in his love and in his mercy, and eternally blessed are such in this world and in the next; "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Now I know that you are well acquainted with these things, you know the plague of the human heart, the blessings and benefits of Christ's death, the preciousness of faith, the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and the sensible enjoyments of the presence of God. You have felt the sweetness of these things, and let nothing divert your mind, or draw you away from them, for "What shall profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Accept my kind love,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

Cabin, Tuesday Morning, Five o'Clock.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

YOUR'S came to hand last night, and I thank you for it. I am always glad to hear from you, and earnestly desirous of knowing how you go on, and was glad at my heart, and thankful to

my God, for the visit you speak of, and for the energy and freedom granted to you at the throne of grace, by the promised aid and assistance of the most holy Spirit of promise. These visits should be strictly observed, watched, and thankfully acknowledged, otherwise we displease the holy Comforter, who will not put up with any slight, nor suffer unthankfulness to pass unresented. And remember this for thy comfort, that the Spirit of grace and supplication is secured to us by an everlasting covenant, and that covenant shall never be removed saith the Lord which hath mercy on us; and that mercy Paul describes thus: "Of his mercy he saves us, with the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

You see, my dear friend, how firm God's covenant stands, and how nobly and richly our covenant mercies and blessings are secured, both in the covenant, and in the covenant head, in whom all the promises are yea, and amen, to the glory of God's grace, by the eternal salvation of we poor helpless sinners. The more grateful we are for favours received, the more bold may we be when favours are wanted. Gratitude and thankfulness are fruits acceptable, and well pleasing, and herein is our heavenly Father glorified, that we bring forth much fruit, John xv. 8.

The woman in the Revelations is the church of

Christ, sometimes called a woman, sometimes a city, and you see in the Galatians that Hagar, Mount Sinai, and the earthly Jerusalem, all signify the covenant of works, and all that are under it. Sarah, the covenant of grace, and the heavenly Jerusalem and those in it, are one and the same thing, called the Lamb's wife, hence the covenant is called a city, and so are the elect in it; "Thou shalt be called the redeemed of the Lord, sought out, a city not forsaken," Isai. lxii. 11. The devil sent forth a flood of errors, called doctrines of devils, after the woman, when he found persecution would not do; arianism most likely was the flood cast out, for about that time it was said that all the world was arian, save one Athanasius; but the earth helped the woman. None but carnal professors, hypocritical persons, and earthly-minded men received it; these opened their mouth and received the flood, and by this means these hypocrites were made manifest and purged from the church, and she was made purer and shined the brighter when they were gone; and they turning persecutors shewed the real saints the effects of the damnable errors, and made them more adherent to, and more valiant for the truth.

Sometimes when wars come on, satan labours to destroy the saints, as war is called a desolating flood. When the king of Assyria sent to destroy

Jerusalem, tidings came to him that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, is come forth to war with thee, this draws him away from Jerusalem. Satan's aim was to kill the Jews, God sent him against the Ethiopians, as it is written; "I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee," Isai. xliii. 3. Thus the wicked are a ransom for the righteous, and transgressors for the upright, Prov. xxi. 18; and thus also the earth helps the woman.

I cannot help thinking that all the strange dreams have respect to some calamity coming upon the poor children of God, for the creature in mine was a beast, and in yours not much unlike the enemy of souls, or the old man of sin, or death the king of terrors. It brings a former dream to my mind which I had, relating to all your family, that of being servant of all, for I washed all your feet; and I remember one of the family had three spots on her face, one on the cheek, and two on her upper lip, all which I wiped off with my spittle on a handkerchief, much of this is already fulfilled.

I preach to-morrow morning, and at noon set off. I intend to preach Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, and then return. All the chapels are shut against me; I am to preach in a barn. Farewell, God bless thee. Be diligent, be of good comfort; "Many are the afflictions of

the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

Your's affectionately,

S. S.

LETTER XII.

TO THE SAME.

Paddington, Feb. 2, 1798.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

I WAS glad at my heart when I saw the direction on your's to me, and I know not why, but you and your family have been and still are perpetually on my mind, and have been, ever since I was first at B. Seldom do I bow my knees to God but those of B. come into my thoughts, somewhat like the poor person in Paul's dream, saying, Pray come over into Macedonia and help us; and as Paul assayed to go, assuredly gathering that God had called him to the work, who knows but God may make me useful to thee, and to some more in the old barn, should we be spared and permitted once more to get into the straw together.

I was much pleased in perusing thine to me,

and my bowels yearned over the goodness of God to poor blind creatures bent upon their own ruin; but I will work, says God, and who shall let it. "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Prejudice, enmity, unbelief, hardness of heart, and insensibility are the armour of the strong man, by which he keeps possession of the heart, and the dear Lord Jesus out of our mind, and out of all our thoughts; but when God the Holy Ghost comes with his power upon him, he takes away this armour in which the devil trusts, and by which he keeps the poor soul carnally secure, and in a false peace. These are the effects of an unfeeling conscience, and in this state will the judgment day find all the wicked, and all the foolish virgins, for when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh as labour upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. For the judge will come "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 8—10.

I am fully persuaded that the holy and blessed Spirit of God is now hovering over thee, and

is the author of that fear and feeling, and of those checks, reproofs, encouragements, joys, sorrows, convictions, discoveries of sin and sinful self, misgivings of heart for what is amiss, and inclinations to prayer, and desires after the knowledge of Christ; and was he entirely to leave thee, thy soul would appear naked, unarmed, ungirded, unsupported, weak, frail, defenceless, exposed to every vice, and a prey to every fowler. And the more thou attend to the motions of fear, tenderness, simplicity, watchfulness, diligence, care, caution, circumspection, and reverence of God, and dependence on him; thoughts of him, and of his universal presence, and of his perfect knowledge of thee, and of all thy thoughts, words, and actions; I say the more thou attend to these things the more will that fear grow, till thou wilt find thyself braced up, equipped, strengthened, fortified, emboldened, encouraged, defended, and guarded, even by God himself.

The fear of God is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and where his fruits are planted there he dwells, nor is there one little one in the household of faith, but what has a guardian angel to protect it; hence Christ calls them the angels of his little ones, which do always behold the face of his Father which is in heaven; yea, they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them

who are the heirs of salvation, Heb. i. 14. O my dear young friend, what thoughts, what views, what feelings, what hopes and expectations, what riches, treasures, profits or pleasures, are so sweet, so noble, so endearing, so durable, so soul-enriching, so grand as those that come down from the Father of lights, which centre in God, and lead to immortal and eternal glory.

I have times without number lain on my bed by the hour, looking back on the intricate path that I have been led in, the dangers I have escaped, and the destruction of the wicked which hath appeared so conspicuous, while my poor weather-beaten vessel is in view of the haven, and thousands of vessels of wrath all wrecked behind me. I have with these views blessed him, and wept over him by the hour, and said in my simplicity, How couldst thou find me out! a poor creature, born and brought up in the woods, and as wild as an ass's colt! How couldst thou find me out, and look me up, and reveal thyself to me, and send me as an ambassador from thy court, to one of the greatest cities in the world! and even to speak by me, and that to the souls and consciences of thousands, either as a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, when thou knowest that there was not such another poor, blind, ignorant, vile devil in all the world! But he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he hath chosen

the weak, the foolish, and the base, that he may stain the pride of all glory, and bring into contempt the honourable of the earth.

The Holy Spirit's first work, my dear friend, is to convince us of sin, which he does by bringing our past crimes fresh into our mind and memory, and then he shines into our understandings, and this new light brings them into our view, that we can see them; hence the complaints, I possess the iniquity of my youth, says Job; "My sin is ever before me," says David; "thou hast set our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Art thou come to slay my son, and to bring my sin to remembrance, saith the poor widow to Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 18. This work God says he will do, "I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver," Psal. l. 21, 22. This is done to convince us, to fill us with shame and confusion of face, to drive us to seek forgiveness, and to pray for it, to make us loathe ourselves, and to see and feel the need of Christ; and to shew us the perfect knowledge that God hath of our hearts, thoughts, words, works, and cursed ways, and that he doth not forget them though we do; and to convince us of the dreadful confusion that the wicked will appear in at the great day, when the heavens shall reveal their iniquity, and the earth rise up in judgment against them; hence the

wise man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself in Christ, but the wicked pass on and are punished.

It is true, my dear young friend, that one part of the word encourages the seeking soul, and another militates against it, in our confused apprehension of things; but consider, that we are all by nature children of wrath alike, and of course we are all under the threatenings, reproofs, rebukes, and curses of God; and when the Spirit begins his work in our souls, he brings us out of the flesh, from off all trust in our own heart, arm, and strength, and out of a state of wrath, and unbelief. As this good work goes on within, so we get gradually from under the curses of the law, and of course the invitations, encouragements, and promises begin to speak to us; and as soon as faith and love come, the fear of the law is cast out, and torment too, and then the curses flee away, and the promises come in; then we are no more under the law but under grace, not heirs of wrath but children of the promise. The farther we go under this good work of the Spirit, the more the promises will speak to us; now do you observe and watch this narrowly, and you will see in some future period that the promises will all flow in, and then the curses, threatenings, &c. will appear to none else but to the children of wrath.

Let nothing discourage you in, nor draw thee from prayer, for to abstain from this when we have offended is adding sin to sin; God has

designed prayer as a means of easing the mind of its grief: I poured out my soul before God, I shewed unto him my trouble. It is casting one's cares and burthens on the Lord who cares for us, and will sustain us; it is intended to bring in all that God has promised to give us, For all these things I will be enquired of by the house of Israel, that I may do them for them. God loves it; "Let me hear thy voice, let me see thy face, for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely," Song ii. 14. It is the delight of heaven, "The prayer of the upright is the Lord's delight." O Betsy, let me have joy of thee, obey my voice, and receive my instructions, and thou wilt find an heaven upon earth; he will be about thy path, and about thy bed, and spy out all thy ways, and when thou awakest thou shalt find thyself still with him; for, "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly," Psal. cxxxviii. 6; for God will dwell with mortal men.

Thy father and mother are shortly coming to see me, I should be very glad to see thee with them, if it could be accomplished. I hope that thy usual success with thy hen will be sufficient to defray the expences of my letters, or else I am fearful that thou wilt come to poverty. Thy father sends me word that a woman who heard me in the cathedral, is in soul travail, and requested of him the loan of some of my books. I long to see the old spot once more, that they may have a second

benefit. Dear sister, adieu; grace and peace be with thee is the earnest desire, and humble prayer of,

Thy willing and affectionate Servant
and Brother in Christ Jesus our Lord,
W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIII.

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE received no answer to my last, the contents not being worthy of a reply; but as most of the household think that a treble portion of divine comfort falls to my share, and as it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks, I wrote my last from that stock, as it then boiled up and ran over. However the fit did not last long, the adversary that stirred it up soon withdrew, for the abundance of such matter would not do for the pulpit, nor the audience, unless they were all dead in trespasses and sins, and needed a dreadful alarm, and overflowing storm, and the iron yoke of bondage.

I intended that my poor friend should know, that the old man and the father of him, can find me out in the cabin, as well as my friend in the woods, and that notes might be compared. However, we gain by all these things, for my prayer

and pleas were so many, so earnest, and so repeated, that the dismal scene was soon changed, for such frames may serve to humble the soul before God, but it is trying work, and would have a strange effect upon an audience of two thousand people. But blessed be his name, there is no holding a contention or dispute long with him; he is to us the altogether lovely, and therefore the soul cannot endure what it supposes to be slight, or cold neglect; yea, he is our all, and therefore our all is gone when he is absent. But he will not contend for ever, nor could I tell what he contended with me for, unless it was because I sought him too much; "His anger endureth but for a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," Psal. xxx. 5; and surely since that conflict I have been amply rewarded, and other poor souls have reaped the benefits of it.

Last Sunday came Mr. G. and five more with him; then Mr. L. and his brother in law; poor G. now lifts up his drooping head. Mr. and Mrs. M. are now in town, and as so many were coming which I knew nothing of, the good Lord put me into the fire in order to fetch up something new, to set before the innumerable guests. Sharp conflicts always produce, promote, and sharpen the soul's appetite; satan is up to this, and when the starving soul can get no honey, no milk, no bread, no water, wine nor oil from above, in

order to feed the new man, divine life sinks, and faith that fetches in its food and feeds it, droops and gets out of exercise, then hope flags, and love crawls into the heart, having neither a ray, nor a spark to draw it out. Grace getting thus flat, the old man rouses up, and calls for the old cheer, the desires and gratifications that used in times past to be the chief, and the sweetest, and indeed the only diet that was delightful. The better part still longs for its own native food, but the new man that loves the law of God, being denied its request, the old man that loves the law of sin feeds on, and will until the new man is revived, and sweet food given to him, at which times the old man is neglected: this is the true state of the case, and this case will never be remedied until these tabernacles be unpinned, and laid in the dust.

I long much to see my poor dear friend, and to know how she comes on; hope shortly that we shall assemble once more within the walls of Zion, where many a comfortable and heavenly visit has been granted. I have heard of you and Mary at L. Mrs. and Miss M. are now with me. The last doleful ditty brought no answer, but this lark-line, this shoeing horn I hope will, that I may know how you, and all the poor souls at B. are. Abate not in diligence, abate not in seeking ——this is all I fear.

Ever thine,

S. S.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE SAME.

My dear young Friend,

GRACE and peace be multiplied unto thee through Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour, Amen. Thine epistle according to custom was received at the door and brought up to me, which I immediately opened without looking at the direction, as it is seldom that any letters come to my house but those that come to me. I called my daughter up when I found from whence it came, and read it to her, and gave it her. It came on my mind, who knows but this my young acquaintance is a chosen vessel, and that both her letters should fall into my hands, designed so of God on purpose that I should answer them, and that God may own and bless the answers to encourage and revive the desires of her heart; and it likewise came on my mind the number of boys and girls from eight to ten years of age when I first came to London, who took a fancy to my ministry; yea, I believe the number amounted to thirty, and who are now married people, and fathers and mothers of many children, and who

belong to us to this day, though some are fallen asleep. Two little boys from one house, both orphans, came under me now near eighteen years ago, who are both members with us to this day, and good young men they are; how great a blessing is this; and should this be thy happy case, my soul should rejoice, even mine.

You intimated in your first letter, that there was some savour in what you had heard in town, and in your last that you got a little reviving in the few scraps that I sent, and if so, God must have some hand in it, for he is the Father of all mercies, and the God of all comfort. And when he quickens the soul to feel its need, and to feel the power of his grace and truth; when he gives us a longing heart for his favour, and a hunger and thirst after righteousness; a humble mind under a sense of our foolishness and folly, and meekens and softens our souls in our secret prayers, and searches after him—there is a sublime, and supernatural sweetness, a richness, fulness, and satisfaction in it, which is not to be described. These things never put us to bed stung with guilt and bitter reflections, they are not attended with the lashes of a guilty conscience nor with the accusations of a cunning devil, nor with tossing from one side of the bed to the other with inward grief; nor do they cover us with shame and confusion of face, nor with the

dreadful piercing thoughts of all our sins being brought to light in the great day before God, angels, and men.

The thousands of hours that I have spent awake on the bed in the night, with tears of gratitude in my eyes, and the love of heaven in my heart, while reflecting on the way that I have been led, the troubles that I have been brought through, and the unalterable goodness and mercy of God that have followed me all through my days; the numbers of youths that have been cut off, the fearful ends that some of them have come to; the several gentlemens' families that I have lived in, who are now all gone, and not one of them, nor one fellow-servant that I know of that ever knew and feared my God: when I the most illiterate, ignorant, blind, and despicable, am still alive in every sense, and not only raised to hope, but a messenger of the Lord God of Hosts to one of the greatest cities in all the world; I am a wonder to many, but to none so great a wonder as to myself.

In my carnal state I never could rest, destruction and misery were in all my ways, and the way of peace I knew not; vanity was in every thing that I sought after, and always disappointed of the happiness I expected, therefore cutting disappointment and vexation of soul were all that I ever got in the drudgery of

satan; I sowed to the flesh, and all that I reaped was corruption, and when divine justice overtook me, then I paid the reckoning. It used to be a terror to me in my carnal state, the thoughts and knowledge God had of me, and of all my works and ways, and I was afraid of death, of wrath, of the devil, and almost of my own shadow; but now the thoughts of God's perfect knowledge of me, of my heart, works, ways, intentions, and designs are a pleasure to me, and all his ways are peace; nor has he ever left me unsupported in one time of trouble, nor has one trial come upon me out of which I have not been delivered. O my young friend, who is like unto God, or to the faithfulness of God to those that are round about him.

I saw a letter from your father, yesterday, wherein he informs us that the chapel, or the old barn, is clearing out, and getting ready; the Lord send us a forward and a mild spring, that I may visit them, see them, and once more bless them under God before I die. I would advise thee to give thy mind to reading, a chapter often read furnishes the mind with thoughts, and thoughts lead to meditation,and meditation entertains the soul; "In the multitude of my thoughts within me," says the Psalmist, "thy comforts delight my soul." And however weak thou art, however awkward, however reluctant, however at a loss, or however timorous or bashful thou mayest be at

prayer, yet never give it up, always pray and never faint, for in due time thou shalt reap if thou faint not. God delights in the prayer of them that seek him, "Call upon me in the time of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," Psal. l. 15. And again, "Let me hear thy voice, let me see thy face; sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely," saith the dear Redeemer of souls.

Moreover, prayer excites and encourages fear, for when thou art enticed by satan to do evil, it will spring up in thy mind, How then shall I face God at night when I go to bed, and pray I must, or conscience will lash me all night, and sin will bring the rod, or hardness of heart upon me; this will help to keep thee in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Nobody knows, nor can know, but those who feel and enjoy it, the noble, glorious, and infinite satisfaction that God supplies the souls of his people with. I have now been, going on twenty-five years, in his service, and notwithstanding the sore trials, and cruel oppositions that I have met with, yet to this day more happy than all that ever set themselves against me. Furthermore, thou must not think it strange if God should shine into thy heart, and discover thy natural depravity, which thou and all mankind are born with; nor need thou be surprized should very evil and disagreeable things be sent through thy mind, especially

when going to, or when engaged in prayer; the devil is the author of these, and when we would do good, evil is present with us: all that are now in heaven went thither through much tribulation, and all were exercised with the same evils. I should be glad of a line if convenient, and may the Lord bless these few scraps to thy soul's comfort is, and shall be the hearty prayer of thy father's friend, thy mother's friend, thy sister and brother's friend, and thy soul's friend and well-wisher in Christ Jesus, my Lord and my God,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XV.

TO Mr. C.

Cricklewood. Edgeware Road.

Dear Friend in Christ Jesus,

I WAS glad to see a few lines from you, which last night were brought to me by your son-in-law. I hear continually, and that from different quarters, that the darkness begins to pass away, and that the true light spreads itself, and gains ground; and so it is written, when the heart of the poor sinner is turned to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away, and the yoke shall

be destroyed because of the anointing, Isa. x. 27. Light discovers the darling object, and love dissolves the stony heart, bursts the legal bands, and sets the prisoner of hope at large. Nothing so perilous as a blind watchman groping on the dark mountains of Horeb, and crying, Lo here, to blackness, darkness, the tempest, and the voice of words: "O my soul come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united," for in a broken law God is a consuming fire, in a killing commandment an inexorable creditor, in unappeased wrath terrible in majesty, in unsatisfied justice an angry judge; but in the face of his dear Son a propitious father, in a covenant of grace a fountain of living waters, and in an unconditional promise in Christ our exceeding great reward.

The hearts of all believers open and shut, rise or sink, conceive or discharge, harden or melt according to the above views, hence the charge, "Look unto me;" "Run the race set before you, looking to Jesus," Heb. xii. 2.; and while we look we "are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." "Have I been so long with you and hast thou not seen me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." But God as a father, is never seen or known but in the face of Christ Jesus; God hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the know-

ledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus, 2 Cor. iv. 6.; and it is the light of his countenance that casts up and points out the path of the just, and the heat of the sun of righteousness that warms the heart, and wooes it to walk in that charity which is the more excellent way.

Hagar and Sarah, says Paul, are the two covenants, and the two Jerusalems; and how many citizens of this country have we got? Citizens of the Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage; these are the enemies of the poor prodigals who feed with husks. And under such the wise man's saying is verified, "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city," Ecc. x. 15. Christ is the way, and we walk by faith, and faith believeth the love of God in Christ, and charity never fails. "Cursed be he that causeth the blind to wander out of the way," for he counteracts the purpose of God, who brings the blind by a way that they know not. But the light of his countenance makes darkness light before us, and when all things work for our good, then and not till then, are crooked things made straight.

Tender my respects to Dame, and to your Son, and should God permit and spare the Coalheaver, we may see each other once more, when the winter is past, when the rains are over and

gone, when the flowers appear on the earth, and when the singing of birds is come, and when the voice of the turtle is heard, and the vultures are screaming against her,

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVI.

TO MR. I. B.

The Doctor to his Friend, Grace and peace be multiplied.

ACCORDING to his desire I here send him a few thoughts upon the ordinance; a feast, as Christ Jesus in a sacrifice is, and of which the sacrament is an emblem, is intended for living persons; we never see a corpse sit up at a table; and all that believe have eternal life, and this life is discovered by a sensation of the evils that are in us, and by a sense of the mercy of God at times upon us, and by a continual hungering and thirsting for more of that mercy; and the scripture saith, "They shall come to the feast that were ready to perish," for the Lord will fill the hungry with good things.

Faith at its first beginning, and when weak or out of exercise, is not so perceptible, but whenever it moves it may be discerned by the following things; during its exercise it stays the mind, it brings peace to the soul, and is attended with a sense of the approbation of God, and with his presence with us in some degree, which during this time works by love, and draws forth the heart and affections, and thanksgivings to God; and the more of these we have, the stronger faith gets, and cannot be fully disputed out of all that the soul has felt under these exercises. These visits, though short and transient, yet being attended with the flowings out of the heart in gratitude to God, must convince us that we are not enemies, or in a state of carnal enmity, but friends. A feast is made for friends, " Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved," Cant. v. i. This character Christ gave his disciples on the very day that he first broke bread with them, " Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends," John xv. 15.

The qualification under the Old Testament was circumcision, he was to be circumcised and then to eat it; and God circumcises our heart to love him that we may live, and they are passed from death to life who love the brethren; and it is easy to tell whether I esteem them the excellent of the earth who I believe love the Lord Jesus, hence you read in Jude, of feasts of charity.

The next thing required at this feast is, that we believe in, and receive the doctrine of, imputed righteousness, and the fruit and effect of that righteousness ever was, and ever will be, peace; and though this peace be not always enjoyed, yet any person may know whether he ever was favoured with the enjoyment of it or no. The ordinance is a marriage feast, it is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, hence the king found fault of him at the feast, who had not on the wedding garment.

Those texts mentioned by Paul, such as not discerning the Lord's body, and eating and drinking unworthily, &c. are such as a weak believer cannot try himself by; look to the disciples and see where they were when the Lord gave it them, they could not discern the Lord's body for it was not offered, nor were their eyes opened, nor did they know the scriptures, nor the end of his death, nor of his resurrection; yet they believed in him, and they followed him; they loved him, and they abode by him; and if nothing in this world will satisfy us but Christ, he must have our hearts, and if he has got our hearts he is our treasure.

Farewell,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVII.

TO THE SAME.

My dearly Beloved Brother in the Lord Jesus Christ,

You know not how much I long to see my B. friends, and I am now in hopes of being enabled to reach L. if some unforeseen accident or frowning providence, doth not cut my pleasing expectations off, which I hope in God it will not. I am half dead with a cold and violent cough, but I still blunder on, for my soul will work if the body gives it up. I have been labouring with his Excellency to make an exchange with me, and he has been throwing such mountains of difficulties in the way, that I have been almost ready to act the Welchman with him; I have sent to request a yea or nay.

This winter has swept away many of the old standards from us, and death works in me, yet by my preaching life works in others; the outward man decays, but the inward man waxes not old. God is the father of the new man, and being of a divine origin he will for ever be the new man; and truly the numberless infirmities of the body, and the many cross and mortifying disappointments which happen to cross the flesh,

often occasion fresh vigour to faith and hope, and a fresh sickness of this world and all that is in it. But God will preserve, revive, renew, refresh, and keep alive all his plantation of grace; fear, hope, love, faith, meekness, patience, contrition, compunction, godly sorrow, self-abasement, humility, and self-abhorrence, mourning and weeping after him, confessions to him, desires after him, poverty of spirit, and a hunger and thirst for his presence, praise and thanksgiving, all these are the crop from which the Lord receives his tribute; and every time either of them is exercised toward God or toward his people, there is a fruit brought forth, and sometimes the Spirit moves one and sometimes another. Tender my kindest love to all friends.

Your affectionate Friend

and Brother in Christ,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Why John, what are you about? What, have you forgot yourself? Are you mad, or what? Never think to gain any ground, nor to obtain

any victory by looking within, there is nothing got that way. No patient is cured by poring and pondering over his diseases; the devil loves to get us at this, and as soon as he has stirred up one corruption, then he will put fresh life and vigour into another, and then lead us into another chamber of imagery, and then make us look, and as we look we sink, and as we sink we fret, and as we fret we straighten and contract; and this brings fear, chains, infidelity, rebellion, and despondency. But is this what the scripture calls looking to Jesus? Is it not the blood of Christ that cleanses from all sin, now within the vail? Is it not the righteousness of Christ which justifies us from all things, now in the presence of God, and before the throne? And do not we wait in hope of the righteousness which is by faith? And is not this a crown of righteousness, which the righteous judge will give us in that day? And is it not to all and upon all that believe? And is not peace the undoubted and infallible fruit and effect of it? And has not thy soul often felt and enjoyed this?

O John, we are complete in him; without fault before the throne; all fair and no spot in us. "God hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel," Numb. xxiii. 21. "Ye are clean every whit," says the Saviour; "Clean through the word which I have spoken unto you," John xv. 3; for he saves us with the washing of water by the word, that is, the power, the peace,

the life, the comfort we feel under the word, is the spirit that cleanses —— this you have known and felt, and let not the devil dispute thee out of it; "Cast not away your confidence, which hath a great recompence of reward." Give no place to the devil, banter him, bring forth the sword of the Spirit to him, It is written, it is written, he cannot stand this. Keep your eyes on the head, who is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and he loves us dearly, and will never, never leave nor forsake his dear-bought family.

Besides, do you suppose, or can you think, that our dearly beloved Lord and Saviour brings that confusion to your mind? Is he the author of darkness, legal bondage, bitterness of spirit, and strife that you feel? Does he send, or cause to spring up those doubts and fears, infidelities, and misgivings of heart which the devil has the insolence to father or palm upon the holy, harmless Lamb of God? No, no, whenever he visits thy soul he goes through these briers and thorns, which the devil sets against him in battle, and burns them all together, Isai. xxvii. 4. He always brings thee forth to the light, that thou mayest behold how righteous he is; peace, joy, comfort and quietude are always the effects of his visits. He removes satan's rubbish, and brings his beloved grace, "His reward is with him, and his work before him." I do believe that

God set me to write this, and that he will accompany it.

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIX.

TO THE SAME.

My Dear Friend,

ACCORDING to my promise, I send these few lines to let you know that we arrived safe, but as for me I was quite weary with the heat of the day, and continued in a fever all the rest of the week, and was very weak on Sunday Morning; and it being ordinance day, and having six times running to preach, I was not a little discouraged, as the weather was so hot. On Tuesday night we opened Monkwell-street, after its having been shut up three or four months, and was so crowded as to be almost melted; but God was better to me than all my fears, for he led me through with a very high hand, and not one barren time in all the six, and was ten times stronger and better in health when I had finished the last, than when I began the first.

"Verily shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." The strength of

Israel will not appear till our strength is all gone, and there is none left. Much strength is wanted to oppose and conflict with his enemies, and to carry on his work, and who is sufficient for these things? but, "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength;" hence the paradox, "Let the weak say, I am strong;" and many times have I observed his strength to be made perfect in my weakness, when my heart and flesh both have failed. But it is throughout the whole pilgrimage, as it is at first finding favour in his eyes; "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both," Luke vii. 42. Thus none but insolvents find forgiveness, none but criminals find righteousness, none but the dead find life, and none but the perishing find bread; the poor find wealth, and the weak strength; he will be a whole Saviour, or none at all.

I shall not be able to fill up this paper, for my travailing pains are coming on me again, as is the case with me weekly. No labour, no power on Sunday, and so it is with all spiritual hearers; if they have no furnace-work in the week, they have no appetite on Sunday, and if no appetite no food; they go away crossed and disappointed, murmuring and rebelling, and this betrays them into a spirit of bondage, and bondage is a bitter portion, and nothing creates an appetite better than a cup of this sort of camomile tea; and

after this, ten to one but the next Sunday following, is one of the days of the Son of man; so I go on, and so do you. I hope the harvest is almost in, do inform me by a line. Remember me to all the family.

Your's most affectionately,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XX.

TO THE SAME.

My diocese, my dear friend, greatly increases, and I bid fair to be a bishop at large; the more I am debased, the higher I rise, and the more I am resisted, the more I extend; and blessed be he that enlargeth Gad, for the Lord's forces must go on, from conquering and to conquer. My bow still abides in strength, the arrows of the Almighty still fly abroad, and enemies are still falling under him. What pains does the Lord take to get a wife, and how many foreskins of the philistines are told down in his obtaining her. First he goes as a man of war, girds his sword upon his thigh as the most mighty, and in his majesty rides prosperously, discharging his irresistible artillery, which are sharp, in the hearts of his enemies, till they bow to his sceptre,

submit to his yoke, kiss and embrace the Son, and crown him king of their hearts, by acknowledging his all-conquering power, and by ascribing all the glory of our salvation to him. He then dispenses the words of truth, meekness, and righteousness, and then up we get into the chariot of salvation, paved with love for all espoused souls, made free by new covenant mercy, and therefore called children of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the covenant of grace, and which covenant is the mother of us all; we being called children of promise, and children of the covenant, Acts iii. 25.

I have but yesterday received good tidings by a letter from a friend in town, that we still increase and multiply, and replenish the earth, though we cannot subdue it. And now how does John go on? Does he gain ground, or loose? Does he hold fast his integrity, or cast away his confidence? Does he make any inroads upon satan, or give place to the devil? Does the battle hang in an even and doubtful scale, or does the exertions of hope counteract the misgivings of heart? Is the door of hope open to thee? Is the gate of life displayed, and do you go in and out, and find pasture? in to be fed, out to get an appetite; in to be strengthened, out to have that strength tried; in to be encouraged, out to be discouraged; in to be succoured, out to be tempted; in to be melted, out to be hardened; in to enjoy the love of God, and out to lament your carnal enmity.

And pray who keeps house, Sarah or Hagar? And who do you cleave to in your service, to the master or to the servant? To Jesus, or to Moses? If to Jesus, you love, admire, and adore him, and loathe yourself; but if to Moses, enmity and hard thoughts of God are uppermost, and self is the chief object of your pity and compassion. And this will ever be found to be an unerring rule to try ourselves by, whether we be under a new covenant, and an evangelical influence, or whether our old legal and self-righteous spirit, leaven and ferment us: looking to Jesus produces the former, looking to self is the effectual means of procuring the latter. Not one inch of the path of life do we tread in faith, but what satan disputes with us; all our best frames, best wishes, most honest endeavours are criticised, suspected, and censured by the devil; every sensation, every token for good, every evidence in our favour, all our conversation in company, every sermon delivered by the Doctor is sure to be wrong; all is sifted and harrowed up, canvassed and called over, suspected, controverted, and the whole truth of it, and sincerity is much questioned by this king of endless misery, this demigod of all deception, and this supreme sovereign of eternal torment.

This day is a fine day, and my noddle is upon the wing, and my imagination upon the wind; I have been this day to ———, to B. to the vicarage at L. and nobody knows where besides,

if you can believe it, but for my part I cannot. I have been up this morning ever since three o'clock, first writing, then giving orders in the garden; in again to write, then out to pruning; in to read letters, then out to find fault, this I learned of the scrap of Excellence. Poor Betty at Seven Oaks has been up to see me, and fell sick with her first fit of the gout. Pray send me word how you all are, and you will oblige

S. S.

LETTER XXI.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Friend in the Lord Jesus,

GRACE and peace be multiplied unto thee, through the great and glorious channel of all conveyance, our dearly beloved mediator and advocate, through whom and by whom every blessing and mercy comes to us, and through whom and by whom every prayer, praise, or thank-offering can go from us to God with acceptance. He is an everlasting father to all the family, and a glorious throne to his father's house. The keys of the kingdom of God are upon his shoulder, he opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. He is fastened as a nail in a sure place, and where

he was nailed there he nailed our sins, and the hand-writing that was against us. The offspring and the issue, and all the vessels of mercy from the cups to the flaggons, must hang here, Isai. xxii. 24.

An arm of flesh, trust in the human heart, the doctrines of men, a form of godliness, all trust in a broken law, or confidence in the best of frames will give way, so Peter found it, and many others; but to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, is everlasting strength; this foundation can never fail, nor shall the gates of hell ever prevail against it, or against the soul that builds all his hopes, dependence, and expectations on it. The human nature of the Son of God is his throne, in which all the fulness of his godhead dwells, and out of which every perfection of infinite divinity will for ever shine. In this nature our sins were borne, upon this assumed nature the curse of a broken law was executed, and of whom justice got full satisfaction: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted," Isai. liii. 7; the whole debt was exacted, and he made restitution; he restored that which he took not away. Thus justice satisfied and judgment executed, became the habitation of his throne, that mercy and truth might go before his face, Psal. lxxxix. 14; to the honour and glory of truth and righteousness, in sweet harmony with mercy and peace, which met together and kissed each other

upon this pacific occasion, which brought daring rebels to the cross, and God himself to dwell with the rebellious.

In the face of Christ crucified, God appears well-pleased, and shines with pleasure, approbation, and delight upon all that approach this throne of grace, sensible of their wants; hence faith in Christ becomes the only way of access, all other avenues are stopped up; in every other view God's face, as well-pleased, is hid, and the sword of justice is brandished to keep this way intire, this way of the tree of life. Here we may come with boldness to the throne of grace; there is no obstacle, no let, no hindrance in this way; the sword of justice is sheathed, the law magnified, the ransom price paid, the devil dethroned, sin expiated, wrath endured, God well-pleased, sinners redeemed, enemies reconciled, and gifts received for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them. It is with the broken and contrite-hearted, and with those that tremble at his word that he will dwell, to revive the heart of the humble, and the spirit of the contrite ones, Isai. lvii. 15; for after he has smitten them, crossed them, disappointed them, weakened them, crippled them, softened them, and humbled them; made them sore, tender, chafed them and fretted them, till they are grieved, dejected, dismayed, wearied, and sore wounded — then he revives the broken heart, and the contrite spirit, by the dis-

coveries of his love, tender pity and compassion; by the humbling operations of his mercy, by the sweet rays of his reconciled countenance, by budding hopes and melting joys, by softening words and encouraging promises, by the Spirit's softening and dissolving allurements, by energy with him in prayer, by self-abhorring sensations, by the most cutting views of sin and the most endearing prospects of pardon, by intolerable self-loathing and unutterable feelings for the crucified Redeemer; all these are preludes to, and earnests, and forerunners of better days to come.

For who are those that the Lord Jesus is sent to? Why to the broken-hearted, to bind them up with love; to the prisoner who feels his chains, and the power of satan, to proclaim liberty to them; to the weary, to speak a word in due season to them; to the weak, to increase their strength; to the mourners in Zion, to comfort them; to the weary and heavy laden, to give rest unto them; to feed the faint, to seek the strayed, to save the lost, to heal the sick, to teach the ignorant, to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide their feet into the way of peace. My dear young friend and brother, set thy heart upon these things; these will stand when thou shalt say, as I do of all other vanities, that my soul hath no pleasure in them.

This, my dear friend, is the better part, the better portion, which cannot be taken from us; but all others will appear a universal blank, and leave us without a prop, without a plea, without a claim, without a grain of faith, a beam of hope, or a living coal of divine love—so I write, and so you believe. May the better part, and best of blessings rest on thee, is the desire and prayer of,

Dear friend,

Ever your's in Christ,

W. H. S.S.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE SAME.

Wednesday Morning. Cricklewood.

Beloved,

Next Sunday is Christmas day, a day which by such poor souls as ours will never be forgot, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder," and not upon ours. "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and

fuel of fire: for unto us a child is born," Isai. ix. 5, 6; born a warrior, born to fight, and to fight with fire; "For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many," Isai. lxvi. 16. With the sword of the Spirit, and with the arrows of conviction, he attacks the elect rebels, the sword cuts them to the heart, the arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby they fall under him, submit to him, bending to his will; they, by the Spirit of truth, by a love to his name, and by a zeal for his righteous cause, become on his side, and for him; they plead his cause, vindicate his honour, and use his sword on his behalf, while the fire of love and zeal sharpens the edge, and emboldens the soldier, while the captain of our salvation by a fresh supply of grace, an increase of knowledge, and fresh discoveries of his love and power, keeps his troops though faint, yet pursuing.

On the other hand, satan seing his kingdom disturbed, weakened, plundered, and his loyal subjects and lawful captains taken from his hand, and raised up to fill his place in heaven, made vacant by his sin, falls in jealous rage upon the Lord's subjects (now become loyal to him), like lightning falling from heaven. He musters his forces armed with iron breast-plates, or a seared conscience; furnishes their mouths with bitter words, called drawn swords, and their souls are

inflamed with rage in his cause; their wrath is kindled against us, and surely if the Lord was not on our side they would swallow us up: "I came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword and a fire; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" Thus this war must go on, ten thousand against twenty thousand, till the good fight of faith is fought, and heaven reward the conquerors; and then hell shall receive the rebels, and endless flames destroy the sinners as stubble fully dry—this is the fuel of fire. In this war expect no parley, no cessation of arms, no winter quarters; no, nothing but an eternal pension. I should be very glad to see you these holidays.

Your's most affectionately,

S. S.

LETTER XXIII.

I WISH much to know how you got home, as it was so uncomfortable a day for travelling, if you set out on Tuesday as you intended. The Lord's unction is the oil that makes the face to shine, Psal. civ. 15; and every beam or ray of this shining lustre, is watched and observed with a jealous eye, especially by those who have any

understanding or knowledge of the glory of this anointing oil. Yea, hypocrites can see it as well as saints, for this seems to be the discriminating mark of the wise virgins, and by which the foolish knew them. The wise had the forgiveness of sins, which is the lamp of salvation; they had much forgiven and therefore loved much; their love sprung from pardon, which is called the joy of salvation.

Secondly. It sprung from the love of God shed abroad in their heart by the Holy Ghost; love is the fire, and joy the oil and flame.

And, Thirdly, it sprung from peace of conscience; "Our rejoicing is this," says Paul, "the testimony of our conscience." Hence the pardoning love of God in the heart, and the witness of the Spirit in their own conscience, was their lamp, and their oil was the joy of the Spirit, blazing out from the inward testimony of conscience; this made the face of the wise to shine, which shewed the inward assurance of their souls, and their love to the bridegroom; this the foolish saw, namely, that God was the health of their countenance, and their God. The joy of the foolish sprung from natural affections stirred up, and natural passions moved; such hear the word, and anon with joy receive it, and having no law applied, no conscience awakened, no bondage felt, no wrath nor guilt working or stirring within, their joy continued to the last.

But when the midnight cry came, conscience awoke, wrath and guilt, fear and shame all sprung up together; then all natural love to the Saviour damped, and the joy of corrupt affections withered, their heart sunk, and their countenance fell, and the lamp of the wicked went out when the light of the righteous rejoiced.

How strangely have I been led out of my way; I intended only to observe that a hot, smoking fit of furious jealousy, called coals of juniper, might serve to stir afresh, and these coals are sometimes succeeded by a live coal from the altar of burnt-offering. However I have caught a text by this ramble, so that I am a gainer by the chase.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXIV.

The Doctor sendeth greeting,

THROUGH the wisdom, the power, the faithfulness, the truth, and the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, the devil that led ——— on, has deceived him, and helped to ripen him for the worst and most fearful of all ends, that of an heretic, a deceiver, an impostor, and hypocrite,

and an apostate, and my soul hates him, and I believe his soul abhorreth me; and this is the bar, this the criterion of the serpent's seed, and Zion's seed. It is to them an evident token of perdition, and to us an evident token of salvation, and that of God; and these are the effects of the two mountains of brass, at which the one kicks, stumbles and falls, and on which the other stands so fast as not to be moved from the rock, though the rains descend, the winds blow, and the floods beat vehemently, being founded upon a rock; and that rock being a chosen, an elect, a precious, and a sure foundation, and a chief corner stone.

This discriminating decree of heaven is the gulf fixed, and a deep one it is, never to be fathomed, dived into, nor searched out, but must be solved and resolved into the good will and pleasure of God, who has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain the salvation that is in Christ, and that with eternal glory; and this many of our enemies see, and know, and fret and kick at. And so says the Lord, "And they shall call them, The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, a city not forsaken," Isai lxii. 12. Again, "And all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed," Isai. lxi. 9. And this is seen by thousands; Saul owned it to David, and the effect

of it is, as the wise man says, "The wicked are an abomination to the just; and he that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked," Prov. xxix. 27.

And this has brought to me, from various of the sons of darkness, many a desperate laugh, many a revengeful smile, and many a horrid and hellish grin. I could not but observe this last Tuesday as I went to Monkwell-street, I saw some youths who appeared as if the devil looked through their eyes, and grinned at me from their teeth, the mouth of such being the hole of the asp; but, "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful;" says wisdom, "and the end of that mirth is heaviness," Prov. xiv. 13.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE SAME.

The Cabin on board the Providence, outward bound, for the Fair Havens, the Friendly Islands, and the Cape of Good Hope.

YOU must not wonder at this, for over my study door at the chapel is written, in large gilt letters, The Cabin. Whether in bondage or in

liberty, whether in the dark or in the light, whether the Lord be absent or present, I seek retirement as the best way to settle accounts; public means are ploughing and sowing, but private meditation, observation, reading and prayer, harrows it in; besides it is a rare thing to find a companion of your own stature. This I recommend to thee, to observe all that appear to frown upon thee, or favour thee in thy castings down and liftings up, discouragements and encouragements, embracings and refrainings to embrace, rods and healings, and let confessions, acknowledgements, thanks and prayers, praises and blessings move in concert with these different dispensations, as the wheels do with the cherubims; the cherubims are nothing but preachers, and the wheels are nothing else but the churches, called the chariot of his willing people.

In the Revelations the wheels are called elders, and the cherubims beasts, and both join in this song, "Thou hast redeemed us." A cherub is an ox, compare Ezek. i. 10, with Ezek. x. 14; mind, what is called an ox, in Ezek. i. 10, is called a cherub in the tenth chapter, and fourteenth verse. They are oxen that tread out the corn, and they that eat it, digest it, and concoct it, move in concert; and do you see how they sing in Revelations, the fifth chapter, eighth and ninth verses. Be frequent at the bible when a leisure hour offers, it furnishes the mind, and counteracts

the devil in the sale of his wares; youthful lusts, vanity, and uncleanness is all he can feed on; he is the same in the carnal mind as the sow is in the mire, a foul spirit, and this we know by sad experience. However so it is, " Dust shall be the serpent's meat," this he is doomed to, and no more to feed on the favour, approbation, love, glory, nor the joyful presence of God; and it is a hell to him to see poor sinners of mankind indulged with such heavenly cheer through Christ; hence the uncleanness, wrath, and rage that the devil sometimes fills us with, when he is suffered to influence us, and wreak his rage upon us; for when the prince of this world cometh, he hath plenty in us to work upon, though he found none of this in Christ, yet he was suffered to tempt and try his pure and heavenly mind, and for wise ends, that he might succour us in our temptations. Be open also to ——, to unbosom a secret grief is to saddle another with half the load; to disclose a devil's secret, is to expose him to shame and contempt; and for two or three to unite in prayer against him is to be an army with banners, for two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken, for the Lord is sure to be one, when two or three meet in his name.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVI.

TO MISS B.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with thee. I have no doubt but you have met with many changes since I saw you last, satan will not quit his possession without violence and strong opposition, but the prey shall be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive shall be delivered. Christ will have a portion with the great, and he will divide the spoil with the strong; hence, says Paul, our weapons are mighty through God, to pull down strong holds. Christ takes away all satan's armour wherein he trusts, and spoils his house; and his armour is false peace, self-sufficiency, self-righteousness, blindness of mind, hardness of heart, enmity against God, and his way, hatred to the light, unbelief, and carnal security.

When the holy and ever blessed Spirit of God comes upon the strong man, he takes away all these, binds the strong man, and spoils his house; so that instead of peace we have destruction and misery, sinfulness, and perfect weakness instead of sufficiency, condemnation

and death instead of righteousness; light to see our evil heart, evil way, the holy law, and all the word of God against us; a wounded spirit instead of hardness, a cry to God for reconciliation instead of enmity, a desire to be searched, and tried, and led right, instead of hatred to the light; a full persuasion that the whole word of God is truth instead of unbelief, and a searching and seeking day and night for salvation instead of security. This, my dear Mary, is the work of God, and he will carry it on; and if you watch and observe you will feel satan labouring at times to strengthen every piece of this armour, and the most blessed Spirit of God will often be felt influencing his work in opposition to it; between these two you cannot do the things that you would, though to will and choose is present with you.

Be not discouraged, grace and corruption will struggle and fight it out, and grace shall reign; God's eternal love to us, fixed upon us in Christ Jesus, shall reign over satanic wrath, rage, and cruelty. Be of good cheer my dearly beloved, for I am fully persuaded that God loves thee, and hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will, and this we may know by the love that he has given us to each other. I have shed many tears of joy and sorrow since my return, at seeing the goodness of God to such a poor despised wretch as I am, in blessing my books and my

preaching, to raise so many poor souls to hope as I found in my last journey, even five in one family.

I have now got more under my wings than my feathers can cover, but in our father's house are many mansions; "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Many pulpits were shut against me, but God opened other places, and he opened my mouth and my heart, till I really appeared a wonder to myself; and that this his goodness might not puff me up, he was so kind as to keep me in a spirit of meekness, lowliness, and self-abasement all day long, crying over his undeserved goodness, and my unworthiness of the least of his favours. Never did I see so many poor starving souls, as I saw in my last journey, some of whom followed me near a hundred miles, and wept bitterly when I came away. Naomi tells me Betsy is very low, I sent her a scrap last week. My duty to mother, love to my true yoke fellow,

God bless thee,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVII.

TO MRS. B.

Dear Mother in the Lord Jesus Christ,

I was glad in my heart to hear by Miss Betsy's letter, that you were in some degree recovered from your late illness. How good is God in regarding the poor petitions of his mean and much despised servants; but he knows them that are his, and who put their trust in him. I bless my God for giving you a comfortable revival of the work in your late affliction, that as the outward man decayed, so the inward man was renewed.

Grace shall reign, my dear mother, and love shall cast out fear and torment, for he came to deliver them who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage; "O Death where is thy sting, O Grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin," and faith purifies us from that; "the strength of sin is the law," and we are redeemed from that. The grave could not hold Christ, nor shall it hold us, "with my dead body shall they arise;" "I will raise them up at the last day." Then where is the victory of

the grace? Why, the Saviour took the bitter cup, he tasted death for every man, and what he tasted that he devoured; for he swallowed up death in victory.

There is nothing, my dear mother, that God has promised us in Christ Jesus, but what we may have if we pray for it. I believed in my heart that God would raise up both you and my dear companion, if we asked him, and though he often seems to delay, and lets our cases get worse, yet they that know a little of his ways will importune the more, and we are sure to reap if we faint not. No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, and it is the upright that love thee, says the holy spouse. Tender my respects to all friends, and believe me to be,

Your willing Servant, in the Lord Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

FINIS.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-st. Oxford-st. London.

GLEANINGS OF THE VINTAGE;

OR

LETTERS

TO THE SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST;

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE.

PART VIII.

There shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. Isa. xxiv. 13.

The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it. Isa. lxv. 8.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY E. HUNTINGTON, 55, HIGH STREET, BLOOMSBURY.

1814.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

CHRISTIAN READER,

I DESIRE to render thanks to Almighty God for his manifold and repeated kindnesses, in appointing the means, removing obstructions, and enabling me from time to time to lay before thee so instructive a body of epistolary correspondence as the Gleanings of the Vintage contain; and that devoid of flattery, or any other motive base in itself, and dishonourable to the God that formed me. The sacrifice of praise is well pleasing and acceptable to the Father of all mercies, but we cannot expect a continuation of those favours, if we follow the objectionable conduct of king Hezekiah, who rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up.

That the blessing of heaven may attend these communications to thy soul's welfare, is the earnest prayer of,

E. HUNTINGTON.

High Street,
Jan. 19, 1814.

LETTERS

WRITTEN BY THE LATE

Rev. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To Mr. W. B.

Brother B.

My heart hath long been at B. and in my own imagination and upon the wings of fancy I have been there and back again for many days past; but these imaginary flights are nothing new, for, for upwards of twenty years under uncommon comfortable frames, I have been as I thought preparing for glory, but instead of that it hath been only a reviving cordial to keep me from fainting when the next hour of desertion, cruel jealousy, or fiery trial came on: and after all my tours to B. I am just where I was, namely at Paddington. The worst lumber, the greatest burden and incumbrance is that part which could not pass over the brook Besor, but tarried behind with the stuff, I mean the carcase and the cloaths; were it not for these I would assume the wings of a dove, and soon pay a visit at Gassons.

The present wet weather discourages me not a little, for your neighbourhood must be very dirty,

and the roads bad. I have had it upon my mind for some time to come through H. I wish to have your opinion of that road. Moreover I do intend, if I can prevail upon —— to stand up one Sunday for me at Providence, to spend one Lord's day with you in the old barn, as soon as the weather shall permit me to come. I have been for a long time past much in earnest and importunate with God in behalf of our much threatened country, and so have all that I know, who are at all acquainted with God; and I can but admire how wonderfully he hath condescended to hear and answer, by the many signal victories he hath granted in our favour. I am in hopes the hottest part of the hour of tempation is over, and that the ruin of France is hastening on apace. O how good is my God to the children of men! how has he kept us in peace while these awful judgments have been abroad in the earth; while hell has opened her mouth beyond measure, and the glory and pomp of so many have descended into it, we have sat under the joyful sound, and have found our salvation nearer than when we first believed. I should be very glad of a line or two to know how you all are, I have not had much time of late to write. Farewell, the Lord Jesus bless both you and yours, me and mine, and his whole church, so prays,

Thine affectionate Brother in Christ,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

Monday Morning.

I RECEIVED my dearly beloved friend's kind epistle, and was glad to hear that he is in some measure recovered. The Lord brings down and lifts up. I have been inwardly drooping for several weeks, but still kept about till last week, having preached five times running, and being all but melted in the work. I went home last Wednesday, much shook and impaired, so that on Thursday could scarcely take my perpetual walks, and am left very weak and low, more so than I have been for some years.

But faith and hope are still with me, the first is the hand, and the other the anchor; and bad off must that vessel be that has no hope in a storm, nor hand to cast out the tackling of the ship. Many warnings have I experienced about quitting this clay cottage, and I am at times so sick of it, that whether I am comfortable or distressed, whether happy or miserable, whether in darkness or in light, I have no earnest desire to abide in it. It is called our earthly house of this tabernacle; bones are the pins, sinews the cords, and breath the main pillar. The leprosy is in the

walls, the plague in the heart, mortality in the whole mass, and corruption in the doom; the creature is subjected to death and corruption, but is subjected in hope: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

"For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," says Paul, "we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." But the question is, What is this house? It is not the heavens, but a house in the heavens, not our house above, but our house which is from above. Whatever this house may be it is called our clothing, 2 Cor. v. This house is further described by our being raised with spiritual bodies, sown in weakness, raised in power; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. This is called a being clothed upon, with our house which is from above, which is explained thus, "For this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality:" but this incorruption and immortality are not the heavens. Immortality is ascribed to the Divine Being alone, exclusive of every thing else, 1 Tim. vi. 16; "Keep this commandment without spot, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ;

which in his time he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light." This life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10. Now seeing that this house, with which we are to be clothed upon, is called life and immortality, and when these are put on, then mortality is said to be swallowed up of life, 2 Cor. v. 4; it remains that this house is nothing else but the Son of God, in all his fulness of grace and glory.

It is the business of faith to put on Christ crucified, and to walk in him; and it is he, in his finished work and fulness of grace, that now adorns the believing soul. And what is Paul's wish, to be found in him in that day? To put him on as risen and glorified; we shall have our vile bodies changed like unto his; we shall awake in his likeness, and see him as he is, and bear the image of the heavenly Adam. But methinks I hear my companion say, 'Can Christ be called an house?' He is called our strong tower, where the righteous run in and are safe, Prov. xviii. 10; our dwelling place in all generations, Ps. xc. 1. Yea, a house also; "Bow down thine ear unto me, deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me," Ps. xxxi. 2.

The Spirit of God will change, form, and fashion these vile bodies, and then, "Every one

that is perfect shall be as his master;" and they shall be perfect in one, be one among themselves, and perfect in one head. Christ will fill all things, all the vessels of mercy are to be gathered in him, Ephes. i. 10; and he is to fill all things, Ephes. iv. 10. "Put on," says Paul, "bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, &c.; but above all put on charity, which is the bond of all perfectness;" this comes the nearest to the putting on of immortality. Thus I have shewn a mystery, and a path that thousands have bungled in vain to describe, calling heaven our house. But a sinner clothed with the heavens, would find but a hell in the presence of God, unless immortality be put on, and Christ only hath immortality. My kind love to all,

Ever your's,

S. S.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

Church Street, Paddington.

I WAS not a little pleased at the reception of thine. A visit of the Lord's countenance anoints the eyes that we may see; it removes the vail, and rends the caul of the heart, and leaves a cavity open for truth to enter in at; it bursts our

bands, and makes the bolt of unbelief give way. It throws down high things, and brings our thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ; it removes the spirit of the world, and sets us to admiring the things that are freely given us of God. The rushing of a mighty wind fills the soul, and with favour we are compassed about as with a shield. God appears as our glory, and the lifter up of our head; the soul is anointed with the oil of joy; and the powerful arm of victorious grace is exalted with honour. The horrible pit vanishes out of sight, as swallowed up in the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; this brings forth the issues from death, and reveals God's way to bliss upon earth, attended with the saving health promised to all nations; then, "Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Ps. cxvi. 7.

As for me, my name is by no means to sink out of date, or to be forgotten in the city; whether I shall do worthily at Ephratah I cannot tell, but sure my name must be famous in Bethlehem. But I know it is for Christ's sake that I suffer reproach, in all mine affliction he is afflicted, they that hate the light in his children, touch the apple of his eye; but for shame I shall have double, and for confusion I shall rejoice in my portion: and I must say in all this, that his yoke is easy and his burden is light, when compared to a sense

of divine wrath, and a guilty conscience, and how much more so when compared to endless misery. I have been out once a week for these five weeks successively, to visit one little place or other adjacent, and have had a cold, but am better at present. I shall expect to see you soon, but wish you to give me a line previous, if convenient; nor will I say that I will not come to B. if the Lord should send us a little fine weather. I beg to be remembered to your spouse and family though unknown, and to brother J. and all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth; and subscribe myself, Dear Brother, Affectionately yours in the rough and disagreeable, but safe and sure path of tribulation,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER IV.

TO MISS B.

Poor Dear Mary,

I AM grieved to hear by Betsy, that your painful complaint has returned upon you again, and also that poor mother is very poorly still. You are not a stranger, Mary, to the holy law of God, a real application of this has, I

believe, been made to thy heart. You have felt the power of it in awakening the mind and conscience; the light of it has discovered the follies of youth, the vanity of a form of godliness, and the enmity of the carnal mind. You have felt the terrors it communicates, the wrath it reveals, the bondage that it genders, the slavish fear that it works, and you have felt the condemnation and death that it administers; these, my dear girl, are the terrible operations of it. The intention of God in this terrible work, is to destroy all vain boasting, to stop the mouth from pleading innocent, and to bring the poor sinner in guilty before God. It destroys the sandy foundation; all false hopes, false confidences, false notions of a God all mercy, an empty form of religion, and all human righteousness, supposed goodness, counterfeit holiness and vain wisdom, all give way, and let the poor sinner down into the pit of horror; here sins staring him in the face, abash and confound him, and the burden of guilt press hard upon him, and the anger of God cuts him off.

One vain imagination still remains with him, he supposes that he has some power, some strength left him, which he supposes must be the case, because God commands him to do so much, which he thinks God would not do, if man had no power to perform. This poor withered arm is often stretched forth, and propped up with

many vows, and good resolves; but being continually disappointed, and therefore baffled and confounded, we despair of any help from this poor broken idol also, and now all refuge fails; a whole Saviour, or lost for ever. This my dear is human nature at wreck, and the whole fabric of natural religion in ruins; out of these ruins a building of mercy is raised. First, light, distant but transient views of gospel ground appears, this raises hope and expectation, which keep us from sinking lower; here and there a passage of holy writ opens to us, and lets the mind in, when a lively sweetness is tasted, this encourages hope, and this begets a firm expectation of better tidings, better days, and that it is in mercy that God has afflicted us.

All the honour of proud and depraved nature, being stained and laid in the dust, all our thoughts are brought into willing captivity to the obedience of Christ; we think of nothing in point of acceptance with God, but by attention and obedience to the voice of Christ. All our desires meet and centre in him, and all our expectations are from him alone, and there is a sweet savour, an unction, a balmy dew in his precious name, and as this encreases, self is disrelished; and as Christ's love is felt, self, sinful self, and righteous self is loathed, debased, yea abhorred. Now our foot-hold appears firm, satan, unbelief, and polluted nature all work, but there is a firmness in the

mind, and a sensible support in the heart; and that which makes this manifest unto us is, confession, complaints, and prayers do not occupy all our time; a few thanks, blessings, and praises, will force themselves through our lips, which by fits of hope and joy rise up in the heart; this shews that the work of grace is begun, "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." It shews that the gates of life and liberty begin to yield, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." We may cry, groan, and sorrow in despair, or exercise desperate sorrow, but no praise will break through from the heart, till some access to God is granted; "Thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise."

Well, girl, you see I have pursued close after thee, and have not missed thy track; I have come step by step, and I have overtaken thee, and thou art not two footsteps from the spot which I have traced thee to. If you say, yea, such a man as you can certainly divine, then I tell thee, that thou art upon the foundation that God has laid in Zion, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against thee. Thy afflictions may be intended as a spur to diligence; secondly, to promote, and put the keener edge to appetite. There is a blessing both upon the appetite and upon the food, to shew that there is life in both: "Blessed are they that hunger and

thirst; and God will bless Zion's provision, and satisfy her poor with bread. Betsy's letter rejoiced me, she finds meekness, and much access in prayer; this is heaven my dear Mary, pursue it night and day. I lay your case before God, and shall not forget you.

S. S.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

My Dearly Beloved and longed for, my joy and the crown of my rejoicing in that day when the Lord shall make up his jewels, when the precious children of Zion that are in this world esteemed as earthen pitchers shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold. I believe that thou art or wilt be my own child in the faith, and I hope that thou wilt not be ashamed of thy progenitor, knowing that my dark appearance will not alter thy fair skin, though I may be of some use in adorning thy soul, or be a fellow-helper of thy joy. I hope that all sight and sense of sin is not worn off, and that the dear Redeemer's name has not lost all his sweet savour; his name is still an ointment poured forth, and this thou wilt own and confess whenever the sweet beams of his blessed

face, and the propitious looks of his blessed eyes, shine and dart their rays into thy heart; healing and health will attend the glorious rising, and the secret manifestation.

Thou knowest not yet what thou art born to see; the Saviour will manifest himself to them that the Father hath given him out of the world. Hitherto thou hast drank of the bitter cup, and hast experienced the days of adversity; but there is a cup of salvation, and days of the Son of man before thee; days of prosperity. And you shall see the curtains of Solomon as well as the tents of Kedar, and sing of mercy as well as of judgment. God will not contend for ever, nor be always wrath; his anger endureth but a moment, in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning: so I predict, and so thou shalt be brought to confess. Be diligent, be much in private prayer, and be thankful for what he hath done. If conscience or satan accuse, confess; if grief overflow, pray; if any glimpse of life or favour, be thankful, and acknowledge every hint dropped, or every encouragement given; this pleases God in Christ Jesus. And by attending daily to these things do I keep my soul alive, while numbers, unobservant of these operations, neglect their books, omit taking stock, and are daily running back in the heavenly trade, though godliness with contentment be such great gain, yea,

better than gold, and the revenues of wisdom are better than choice silver. No mention must be made of coral, or of pearl, for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

I bless my God, he is still with me, and precious to my soul; I make up all my happiness in my shield, and in my exceeding great reward. Let me encourage thee, my dear daughter, to seek after, to cherish and encourage righteousness, meekness, quietude, peace, faith, love, humility, tenderness, diligence, watchfulness upon the hand of God, and gratitude for what he has done, knowing that we have all sold ourselves, and are enemies and rebels. While thou art mourning after greater things, do not despise the day of small things, but acknowledge with thankfulness what thou hast; this is the fault of not a few, which God resents by keeping them in bondage, and making their chains heavy, Read 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

Tender my duty to mother, and love to my companion in villany, in misery, and in mercy.

Ever thine,

S. S.

LETTER VI.

TO MRS. E.

My Dear Betty,

I HAD a good mind to have called on you yesterday, but knowing how you was left, and not knowing how God has prospered the widow, I was afraid. However I have no doubt but her heart is with us, and the hand will shew it, if she can afford it. God does most wonderfully bless his work in the new place; he has made it the banquetting house, the wedding chamber, and the nursery; and it shall be said when God writeth up the people, that this and that man was born there. Betty, the Coalheaver saluteth thee.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER VII.

TO MISS A. T.

My poor little Dears,

ALL hail! Glad was my soul last night to hear that the snare is broken, the little fox that

spoils the vines is discovered; and my dear little ones delivered: and sure I am that you shall see greater things than these. You will soon see what a generation of vipers there are in a profession, and your souls, as well as mine, shall praise him with joyful lips, who has made us thus to differ. All your angels of light will turn into fiends before you, and the more God shines upon your souls, the blacker will they appear. We all rejoiced together last night, and blessed the Lord God of Israel. And how do I long to see my poor dears at Cricklewood. I have been rejoicing with you at B. all this morning, nothing but my carcase and clothes are here.

The Lord send us a little fine weather, that I may once more see you under my roof; surely death itself will never separate you from me. Be sure keep up prayer, in every thing seek God's guidance and assistance, and you shall find there is such a thing as a heaven upon earth; if it had not been for prayer, the wicked would have swallowed me up, and my soul had dwelt in silence. Pray for me, and excuse haste. I am going once more to bear tidings in the city. Kind respects to father. God Almighty bless, preserve, and keep my poor little ones, for if I am bereaved I am bereaved. Grace and peace.

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

WAS very sorry to hear of the sad disaster of ——, hope she has received no material damage; for although I was a little angry with her at my setting off to B. mine anger is turned away, and I do earnestly remember her still in every poor prayer of mine, and hope I ever shall. Poor —— is very ill, and I have no hope for him, but in the almighty arm of God, through the poor, feeble petitions of faith. There is much sickness among us at present, and indeed this world is nothing but an hospital, and every ward has got some that are sick; some of whom their sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. It is too far for me to come to the harvest home, but I wish a plentiful crop, and safe in the barn.

And now how does my little one go on? Does she find the door of hope open to her, so as for a little confidence and expectation to enter in, and to bring out tidings of better days, better things, and better tidings? Is there ever any such a thing felt as the spouse describes, a little sweet swelling myrrh upon the handles of the

lock, or a little heavenly love which softens the rust of a hard and unbelieving heart, so that at times it gives way, enlarges, and opens to the best beloved? Is there now and then a live coal brought from the altar of burnt offering, to melt down, to dissolve, and soften the soul; to meeken, humble, and resign it, attended with cutting contrition, regret, shame, blushing and confusion; attended with self-loathing and pious grief, which are all set in motion by some fresh discovery of, and a feeling sense of, the dying love of Zion's bridegroom?

Does any of the kind invitations, promises, encouragements, and allurements held forth in the word of God, ever come into the mind with any relief, refreshing, consolation, or good news from a far country, just to let you know that your Redeemer lives, and that he has not forgotten to be gracious? Does the heavenly dove ever help thine infirmities on thy knees, so as to ease the mind of its cares, get rid of some part of thy burden, to scatter the doubts, dispel thy fears, and to furnish thee with an answer against a lying devil? I hope my dear little one will send me a solution of some of these. If she takes her pen in hand as soon as she has read this over the second time, I shall receive mine own with usury, but if she puts it off till a more convenient season, the devil will have gained his end, and I shall receive neither principal nor interest.

W. H. S. S

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

My Darling, the joy of my heart, the light of my eyes, the travail of my soul, the trophy of my prayers, the joy of my life, and the nourisher of my old age.

THOU knowest not how we were disappointed last Lord's day, at not seeing my poor little Ann; but alas! we were all disappointed. There is little talked of amongst us but poor little Ann; you are in our hearts to live and die with you.

Cheer up my little one, he will wean thee, he will strip thee, he will purge and try thee, he will kill thee to this world, and to all but himself, and then thou shalt hear his voice and live. His work is before him, and his reward is with him. He is anointed, appointed, and sent to speak a word in due season to them that are weary, to bind up the broken hearted, to save the lost, to open the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf, to pay the debts of debtors, to reconcile enemies, to give life to the dead, wisdom to fools, and strength to the weak.

Be of good cheer, arise, he calleth thee, he calleth to all that are weary and heavy laden, and to all that hunger and thirst, and to all that are made willing to take the waters of life freely.

And sure I am that heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of his word shall fail, disappoint his people that seek him, or pass away unfulfilled. Dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, and the crown of my rejoicing, be of good comfort, wait patiently, and he that shall come will come; nor shall little Ann, nor her unbelief, nor time itself make me a liar.

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE joyful news to tell thee, my poor little one, your poor friend Naomi, who has lain nine or ten years among the pots, is now as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. Yesterday was a week, on Sunday morning, she was very, very low, and when I gave out my text, which was, "Lord, Lord, open to us," she said to herself, O here is nothing for me; but under that discourse God rent the vail, and destroyed the face of the covering that has long hung heavy upon her heart,

and at night she heard to her comfort; and when she went home, to her great surprize, she found her bible unsealed also.

The day-dawn shined in that dark place, called the sure word of prophesy, and such understanding she seems to have as is astonishing; she is almost a prophetess. When she came to find light, harmony, and consistency in the word, and she found understanding and judgment was given to her, the promises flowed into her heart like oil, promise after promise, with all their rich delicacies, and with all their glorious blessings, that she suck and was delighted with the abundant displays of the goodness of her God. She came to town with me on Saturday night, and told me that she never understood any thing that I preached, nor any thing that she read, only felt her misery, her blindness and confusion; but it was all removed last Sunday morning, and she was astonished at herself, and at the comforts she felt, and said, 'I was forced to believe for I could not help it.'

I told her that her path would now shine more and more, and that she would see eye to eye with me, and that the vail on her heart would never gather that thickness again, and that her own eyes would now see her teachers; who is anointed with that holy oil, and who not. I secretly thought on the Saturday evening, that God would

on the next day confirm the work, and accordingly, yesterday morning he did. For —— told me, last night, that after forenoon service she asked Naomi how she heard, she said her very face shined; she lifted up her hands and cried out, O how sweet has my father been this day! Naomi will pay great attention to her comforter, because she is fond of retirement, solitude, reading, and thinking; and now being alone, she will nurse it, and watch it all the day long, and I defy her to sleep if she would. It is this private work that waters the ridges, settles the furrows, blesses the springing, and crowns the new year. I think it is of God that you should be out from home, and Naomi alone, in this day of her espousals, for as God says, we shall all mourn apart for our sins, Zech. xii. 12—14. So he gently takes us aside out of company, when he manifests his love to our souls, as you read, Song 7. 11. 12.

Here, my poor little one, is some ground of hope for you, none shall seek the face nor wait for the Son of God in vain. You have been long in the pit, and God will bring thee out, for I have no doubt but his work is begun in thee; but there is a time for every purpose. I bless the glorious Majesty of heaven for his great condescension, and superabounding grace to my poor, honest, sincere, and affectionate child, who has rewarded her according to his faithful promise,

and according to the integrity that he has put in her heart. My dear Ann, God bless thee, and pay the same visit to thee, so prays,

Thine affectionate friend in the Lord Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

I KNOW not what I could write in my last to my poor little one, from which she could draw such conclusions as those that I hear are in Naomi's letter, unless it was from my saying, that she and her sister were absent, or sent out of the way when the Lord first rent the vail which has long hung heavy on poor Naomi, insomuch as she never before understood what I preached or what she read. And in this I alluded to God's common way of dealing with poor sinners, who have long sought him, that is, take them when alone, or draw them forth from company when he intends to make any discovery to them, as to Abraham when Lot was gone, to Moses when alone with the flock at Horeb, to Jacob at Bethel, when his family had passed over the

brook Jabbock, to Peter in his ship, to the Eunuch in the desert, and to David in the hill Mizar; and indeed to the church at large, this is his language: "Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vines flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves," Song 7. 12; this is the text I referred to.

Am glad to hear that you are coming home, where you are heartily welcome to me; you and I, Ann, can sympathize with each other, for my eyes have been closed this week not a little, the bible has been a sealed book, and I have been kept in suspense, watching, waiting, praying, and thinking from noon till within half an hour of going into the pulpit; and even then two or three texts interchangeably presenting themselves, and I blind to the sense of them all. This tries me not a little, this sets the Doctor to trimming parson Sack, and parson Sack cavils at the Doctor, and the devil laughs at them both; but it must be so in this our country, no cessation of arms till death, and no discharge from that war. But I hope for a pension when worn out with the perpetual fatigues of the field of battle. Twenty-seven years have I been a soldier, and yet to the present moment at drill, for I no sooner learn a new motion but I forget all the old. And now I

am expecting something like Jonah's gourd, a momentary shadow to screen his head, and cool the heat of his rage. My kind love to all friends, while I remain,

Dear Ann,

Your companion in travail, in trouble, in trials, and in tribulation.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XII.

TO THE SAME.

My poor dear little One,

I THANK you for your care, and kind enquiry after me and my welfare, and I can now tell thee, that I am, to my surprize, much better, and much encreased in strength. I have been also much grieved at the weather, and at the awful appearance of famine, but having been much in prayer to my God, I begin this day to lift up my head in hope that God hath not forgotten to be gracious, though we oft forget to be dependent, and likewise to be thankful. O my dear little one, we have a God graciously severe, who will sorely try us, and that my soul knows, but his loving kindness is as sure as his rod; wounding and healing, withdrawing and returning, bringing down and lifting up, searching after our sins and

discovering the atonement; being left to offend him and he giving us a sweet godly sorrow for it, fasting and feasting, appearing black and appearing comely, going in to find pasture and out to feel our need of it, days of mourning and days of rejoicings, are inseparably connected together. And so my dear little one will find it, and by these means she will go from strength to strength, and see her way shine more and more, but without these changes she will not set one step, nor advance one inch; when trials come not on, we stand stone still. I have no doubt but my little one, as young loves, wants much to see her lover, but patience must have its perfect work.

I pay you a visit every day, whether you see me or not, and nothing sure do I long to see more than the wedding day of my poor little one, and whenever it comes it will be the day of the gladness of the bridegroom's heart, for he is as much set upon it as you are, or he would not have begun to woo thee, for he is the last that thou thoughtest to make choice of; any thing before him, but now he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. The Lord hasten the match, so says the friend of the bridegroom, and thy friend in him.

Dear little one, adieu.

Kind love to father.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIII.

TO THE SAME.

My poor little Dear,

I was sorry to hear by yours to your sister, that you was so low, but believe me your consolations will never abound but as your sufferings abound. No crosses, no comforts; no furnace-work, no purity; no bitter herbs, no appetite; no appetite, no banquet. Prosperity always follows adversity, and nothing is so much to be dreaded as sloth, ease, carnal security, and cold indifference; a lifeless life, an hopeless hope, and a lingering languid fearless fear.

From vessel to vessel, from wave to wave, from sinking to swimming, from bitter to sweet, from darkness to light; visits and absence, budding and blighting, flourishing and withering, must attend all those who have life in their souls, the fear of God in their hearts, and who are not appointed unto wrath, but to obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. Therefore let my poor little one expect it, it is my portion, and it must be yours, and there can be no growth without it; "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of our spirits." Be much alone —— without private

prayer, reading, thinking, and meditating, all is vain. Company does an heaven-bound soul little good, it must be carried on and settled between God and conscience. Farewell. Remember me to your father.

Your's in faith and love,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE SAME.

Cricklewood, Edgware Road.

Dearly Beloved Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ,

I AM constrained to send a few lines to enquire after Betsy's health, hoping that her faith is strong in him who took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses, and will make all our bed in our sickness, and make it easy too when our heart and mind are stayed and reclined upon his free, sovereign, unchangeable, and everlasting love, which enables us to hope to the end, and to defy the devil with all his arts, darts, and blasphemous suggestions. For thus saith the Lord, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day: nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the

destruction that wasteth at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but no plague shall come nigh thy dwelling," Psal. xci. 5—7; this I know to be true by long and blessed experience, for our God is faithful to his word, and will never suffer his promises to fall to the ground, or to fail them who rely upon his promising encouragements in Christ Jesus.

The broken and contrite heart, the believing heart, and the heart that hopes in his mercy, are his own living temples; in these he will for ever dwell, and that in order to strengthen us: "My flesh and my heart faileth," saith the Psalmist; "but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever," Psal. lxxiii. 26. I will revive the heart of the humble, and the spirit of the contrite ones, Isai. lvii. 15. Again, Christ dwells in the heart by faith; he first comes as a king and a conqueror, he wounds us and makes us submit; and then he comes as a physician, he binds up the broken heart, brings health and cure and cures us, and reveals to us the abundance of peace and truth. After this he comes as a lover, presents his bright, glorious, and comforting presence to us, and proposes a match with our souls; this kills us quite, this melts us, this swallows us up, it is too great, this we cannot believe: then he gives us a sight of his sufferings, and a feeling sense of them, and of his dying love, and then

we must submit, confess, and say it is truth, and so yield the obedience of faith; this knits the knot, his bowels of loving kindness flow out, and ours melt down under the wonderful operation, and from that day forward we are joined to the Lord, and made one spirit with him. Love is the uniting bond which shall never be dissolved in this world, nor in that which is to come.

And as for thee, sister Nanny, I tell thee, that as sure as Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Son of the Father in truth and love, and as sure as I am a poor unworthy prophet of his, so surely will he manifest himself to thee, and pour out upon thee the promise of the Holy Ghost, and thou shalt have a believing view of that just one, and shalt confess that he is the faithful and true witness, and that he confirms the word of his servants, and performs the counsel of his messengers, for none shall ever seek his face in vain. I was in hope of seeing you and your sister this autumn, but it is otherwise ordered now. Shall long to know how Betsy is, for if she continues ill, will if possible come to see her. My kind respects to her, and to your father, and accept the same. Ruth and Naomi join in love.

Ever your's in faithfulness, truth, and love,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XV.

TO THE SAME.

My dear Ann,

I HAVE wished much to know how your poor father got home, and how you both are now in health, and could but wonder how L. could write, and never mention how either you or your father are. I was very sorry that I saw not your father when in town, but when I heard that he was so ill I could not expect it. Have no doubt but you find yourself at a loss, and rather solitary through your father's indisposition, and want of your old companions, but no place under the sun can set us out of sight, out of reach, or out of the presence of the omnipresent God; and as a God in Christ, and in covenant, he promises to be a little sanctuary in all places whither his people may come. He is our hiding place, refuge, and strong hold, our fortress, high tower, our rest, and our dwelling place in all generations; and faith knows her way to him, and fervent and effectual prayer will reach his ear, however dark we may be in the direction of it.

Endeavour to keep this intercourse open by paying constant visits at court, where and only

where our grievances can be redressed, our wants supplied, and our minds eased. While constant prayer keeps the gate of life, and the door of hope displayed, the troubled soul will always find an asylum, for God is our only centre and our home; and when our thoughts, our confidences, and our hopes can find no shelter there, it is in vain to seek it elsewhere, for all besides are broken cisterns, refuges of lies, and cutting disappointments, therefore by no means get into a slothful neglect of this highest of all privileges. And as this is the great and unspeakable grant of God to all believers, so the prayer of the upright is the delight of the Lord; and those families of the earth are deplorably threatened with fury, that call not upon his name. Be so kind as to tender my best respects to your father, and be so kind as to send me a line how he does, and how you are, and how matters are within, and you will much oblige,

Dear Ann,

Your willing Servant, and affectionate Friend,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVI.

TO THE SAME.

To the Poor Little Ones, Greeting,

BELOVED girls, you must not wonder if you should see the poor despised Doctor come suddenly upon you on Wednesday evening next; but be not afraid, for though I come as a thief, and aim to catch you with guile, I shall not plunder or make a gain of you. I do long to be present, and to put up my poor imperfect prayers in behalf of your poor father, in which I have no doubt but you will heartily join with me. I expect to come in company with ——, we are on an intended journey to Newark upon Trent, if the Lord permit, and therefore intend visiting the little ones on the way, and taking a bed with them. And now for a word of advice; as you are deprived of the means, attend to prayer and reading, that you may not go back, and remember that the Lord promises to be a little sanctuary in all places where his children may go. My kind love to your father, and accept the same from,

Your affectionate friend,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVII.

TO THE SAME.

Newark, Tuesday Morning.

Dear Little Ones,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be at R. I reached this place in safety, have preached three times, and the God of all consolation was with me each time, and that with liberty and power. Alarmed, awakened, tried, and enlightened souls flock from almost all parts within the distance of thirty miles round. There is indeed a famine of hearing the word of the Lord in this place, and in all the adjacent parts. I have invitations from all parts. I cannot get to York, they will detain me in Nottinghamshire. To-morrow I preach at R. then at N. and then at S. and C. and I know not where: but my soul is in the work, and I am amazed how God has owned and blessed my books; they are with the Bible, their only food, through the blessing of Christ upon them. I believe I could travel through the nation, and have all my expences borne, they are so thirsty for the waters of life; and my soul seems as full of good tidings. I purpose to order matters so as to spend a day or two with the poor little ones,

if the Lord permit, and shall endeavour to let them know when they may expect me, and then I hope your poor father will be able to go with me in a post chaise; tender my kind love to him, and tell him that he has a share in my poor feeble petitions. Be much in prayer, reading, and thinking, and be sure to bless, praise, and thank God in Christ's name for every smile, ray, beam, revival, refreshing, comfort, hope, sensation, favour, or kind providence that turns up on your side. The Lord cannot endure ingratitude, or unthankfulness, therefore be observant, be diligent, be fervent, be attentive to his hand and handyworks. My kind love to your father, and my kind love accept, from

Your willing, affectionate, and faithful
friend in Christ Jesus,

S. S.

LETTER XVIII.

TO MRS. T.

Dear Madam,

As my daughter Ruth brought your kind respects to me, and your request of an interest in my poor prayers, which I hope God will hear

in your behalf, I thought that if I sent you a line it would not be disagreeable or unacceptable to you. I am not unacquainted with temporal troubles, nor with soul distress, I was long the quintessence of misery, a poor, burthened, forlorn outcast, that none sought after or cared for; but in answer to a few poor feeble petitions, put up to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God in truth and love, the Lord delivered me. He is the miserable sinner's only friend, the sick soul's great physician, and the lost sheep's only shepherd; an able, a willing, an all-sufficient Saviour, suitable to the sinner's case, exactly agreeable to his wish, having all fulness in him, and infinite satisfaction for all that trust in his holy name.

He tells us to call upon him in the time of trouble, and that he will deliver us, and we shall glorify him; and whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast them out, for he came to call sinners to repentance, and to seek and save that which was lost, and I am a living witness of his faithfulness and truth. I was weary and heavy laden enough God knows, but I found rest in him for my soul, and he will be found of them that seek him, for he has promised that they who call upon him shall be saved, and that he will be near to them that haply feel after him. His precious blood cleanseth us from all sin, his grace is sufficient to support and comfort us under every loss, trouble, or disappointment; and it is to his

honour and our comfort that we let our request be made known unto him, that we cast all our burthens and our cares upon him, for he careth for us. Hannah poured out her soul before him at Shiloh, and went away with her countenance no more sad. Rahab and Ruth fled to him for shelter and protection, and both found it; a friend of the friendless, a husband to the widow, and a father of the fatherless, is the Lord in his holy habitation.

And as for thy son, God is the God of the seas as well as the land; he appeared to the disciples in a storm, to Moses in a bush, to Paul on the plains of Damascus, and to me in a garden. Commit thy son to the Lord, that is the only way to preserve him; do as Jacob did to his sons, God give you favour in the sight of the man, that he may send away your brother Benjamin; and the next news was that Benjamin was returned, and that Joseph was alive, and surely Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Dear Madam, farewell, grace and peace be with thee. So prays,

Thy willing Servant in Christ Jesus,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XIX.

TO MISS T.

Beloved of God,

I RECEIVED your last letter, but am a man in much business and therefore have been silent to thee, though thou hast not been so to me. I bless my God the dear Redeemer of my soul is still with me, and has caused much of his goodness to pass before me, and my faith hath work enough to follow after, and to wonder at his goodness to the children of men. The life of faith is a mysterious life; by faith in Christ's obedience we are made just; by faith in his blood we come out of the pit wherein is no water; by faith in his arm we are made strong; by faith in his love we are made free; by faith in his fulness we are supplied; and by faith in his victory we overcome the world. The business of faith is to go to market, go on messages, and to fetch errands; wine and milk must be bought without money and without price, but if we mix not faith with the word, we get neither. Every message sent to heaven must be carried by faith, whatever you ask believing ye shall receive; strength, comfort, peace and joy must be all brought in by faith. Faith is an excellent beggar, and all that

she gets she gives to the soul: "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." All medicines are brought in and brought home by the same hand; Believest thou that I am able to do this for thee? Yea, Lord; then according to your faith be it unto you; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

The business of faith is to be before us, and beforehand with every thing; it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. It is by faith we walk, and not by sight, what we do not believe to be true we dare not receive, what we believe to be wrong we dare not do, and the ways we are sure are perverse these we dare not go. If unbelief and carnal reason are consulted before faith, we halt and hobble, and as soon as faith works we go all that ground over again. If sin or guilt be committed or contracted, there is a stand, a stop, a let in our pilgrimage, till faith deals with the atonement, then we make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; let it rather be healed. If we get shut up in legal bondage, there is no coming forth, nor going on again till faith works by love; no gratitude to God till we believe this, that, and every trial shall work together for good. Faith's business is to see things that are invisible and realize them, to obtain and apply promises, to embrace Christ, and to call in love to admire and adore the ob-

ject embraced. Faith sweeps the house and purifies the heart, and gives Christ a residence and a throne there; "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Faith fixes her eyes on the king in his beauty, and on that land which is very far off, and tells us in due time that we shall arrive there; he that believes shall be saved.

Faith is as busy in the heart as a bee in the hive, and is very fond of flying about when the sun of righteousness arises and shines. The promises are the comb, and the sweetness in them is the grace, blessings, and comforts promised in these; these faith squeezes into the soul, which makes the little book sweeter than honey. The promises are the breast, and faith milks first one, and then runs and fetches another and squeezes that out; this is milking Zion's breast of consolations, until we are delighted with the abundance of her glory; thus the new born babe feeds upon, and craves after, the sincere milk of the word: honey and milk shall every one eat that is left in the land. After this banqueting is a little over, faith extends our views, and makes us see afar off; she likewise feeds us with knowledge and understanding. As the faith of God's elect she feeds us with election, predestination, and the secret purposes of God, his covenants, counsels, faithfulness, truth, and the immutability of his perfections, and so leads us to live upon strong meat, to feed on more distant views, prospects, and upon

future glory. Fare thee well, peace and truth be with thee,

So prays,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XX.

Thursday Morning.

I HOPE my friend is well, have sent her my Sea Voyage for her perusal, and as I know she is embarked in the same ship, I hope she will meet with some of her own experience in it; I wish her a prosperous voyage. The ship is the covenant of free grace; the Captain is the Saviour; the sea is this troublesome world; the rigging is love, mercy, and truth; the three fathoms are the revealed affection of the Trinity. Christ, his word, and grace, are the three anchors; the lion, ram, and milky way, are the light of the Trinity. The intent of sending this is that you may sup with us on board, and so have a united anticipation with my mind and thoughts since I saw you last. I have another work in hand which when finished you will receive. I have at times thought that you was ill, but I hope not. My wife is purely, the little one is well, and the children

got well over the small pox. Excuse haste. Farewell.

Thy willing Servant in the gospel of Christ,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXI.

TO MISS T.

I RECEIVED my little one's letter, am glad to hear she got down so well, and that she is so much better, and do hope, as her native air seems so well to agree with her, that her frail tabernacle will come under God to some degree of establishment; but above all I wish that the health of her countenance and her God, may be present with and precious to her. The voice of atoning blood in the conscience, the unction of God's Spirit on the mind, and the wedding garment on the soul, is the only health of the saint: "Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him." As for our earthly house the leprosy is in the walls, it is infected; infirmities must invade it, make head and prey upon it, in order to bring it to its decreed doom; "To dust thou shalt return." But O my soul thou art of nobler rank, of higher extract, and of divine origin! God is the Father of spirits; these were breathed into

our nostrils, and under a second breathing of him whose mouth is most sweet, these shall soar aloft and be made perfect, this is their native seat, and God their only centre.

In these mysterious and celestial regions, the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick, for God is their health, and they shall be filled with all his fulness, and God be all in all; all to them, and all in them. Oh, the inconceivable wonder! "Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations," Psal. xc. 1. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and walk in him," Rom. xiii. 14. And no less than this, is being clothed with our house that is from above, for mortality must be put off, and immortality must be put on these frail tabernacles; when he who only hath immortality shall appear, then, but not till then, shall all our joys be full, all our longing and reeking desires and appetites be satiated: "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness," Psal. xvii. 15. This is the hope set before us, and this is the finishing stroke to mercy's fabric, and the full execution of the eternal plan! "He shall bring forth the top stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it," Zech. iv. 7. Mr. B. and the two ladies are with us; the old gentleman and Betsy are very happy, poor Mary is in a low place. Naomi joins in love to your Ladyship and little Ann. Commending you both

to your shield, and to the lifter up of your head, I rest,

Your's in him,

S. S.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE SAME.

Dearly Beloved of God, and Beloved Sister in Christ.

GLAD was I to see at my return home last night, a letter from thee; I had been from home ever since Tuesday morning, but had often visited thee in thought, in mind, in union, and in affection. None but God and the saint knows the lustre, the brilliancy, the glory and the majesty, the soul-enriching, soul-ennobling, the princely dignity, and the soul-humbling, soul-dissolving, soul-emptying operations of infinite divinity which the soul passes under and is enwrapped with, when the Son of God visits his bride, and makes the first discoveries of his eternal love to her. Every thing earthly, sensual, and devilish disappears, and the whole soul is engaged with invisible realities, more excellent than the mountains of prey, and more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir; more durable than the sun, more profound than all the depths

of nature, and more immense than the universal globe.

Heaven itself forbids not the ravishing ascension of our minds, nor refuseth the admittance of our captivated thoughts, and renewed affections; the heart rises up to the place where its treasure is, hope casts her anchor within the vail, and the soul sits together with Christ in heavenly places; this is the first resurrection, it is rising from a death in sin to newness of life, under the operations of the Spirit of God: "With my dead body shall they arise," saith the Saviour; "awake and sing thou that dwellest in the dust, for thy dew shall be as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead," Isai. xxvi. 19. And true it is, for the earth or earthly-minded men do cast out and abhor them that God quickens; but we shall sing when envy slays the silly ones, who hate God, and the admirers of him; and the dew of his grace shall make us a sweet savour in Christ, when the stink of their camps shall come up into his nostrils.

Oh Betty! what hath the Lord wrought? What hath he done for us? And what shall be the end of these wonders? We shall see him as he is, and be like him; he shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body; mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and immortality be all in all: then the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick, for the people that

dwell in the realms of bliss shall be forgiven their iniquity; the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and God shall wipe all tears from all faces; sorrow and sighing shall take their flight, and celestial pleasure shall overflow, while fulness and satisfaction abounding shall superabound, till all old things are buried in oblivion, and all new things for ever possessed, and for ever in view.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of thee and thy sister, knowing, beloved, your election of God by the chastening, supporting, encouraging, continuing, and delivering power which hath been put forth and displayed in behalf of thee and poor Ann, who I know is in the bundle of life, and in the book of God's election, in the heart of Christ, in the promise of God, and in the affections of the least of all saints. I am much bent upon seeing thee, but have many difficulties, invitations to preach, &c. to encounter; nevertheless, hope next week if God permit, and nothing unforeseen prevent, to have that pleasure. Tender my most cordial affection to Nancy, and accept the same from,

Your's in the noblest of all ties, and in
the prospect of the brightest views,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXIII.

TO THE SAME.

My Dear Little One,

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be thy present support, thy constant attendant, thy deliverer, thy aim, and thy ultimate end. I am poorly and low with a bad cold, loss of appetite, and shortness of breath, and was very sorry to hear of thy disastrous relapse; but we are born to trouble, as wave follows wave, and shall never find either rest or refuge but by faith in the wounds of the Son of God. In his stripes there is healing, in his chastisements there is peace; and as it pleased God to bruise him, in his bruises there is divine pleasure, and in his dying love there is rest, and in his righteousness quietness and assurance for ever, attended with plenteous redemption. I have no object for my hopes, no centre for my thoughts, nor satisfaction for my longing soul but this; this is the only hope and meeting place of sinners, the conscious soul's last retreat, the desperate patient's last physician, and the perishing soul's eternal banquet.

However useful we may be in his cause, however fruitful in life, however divinely taught or deeply experienced; however stedfast, valiant,

faithful or laborious, it must all be laid aside in point of dependance and acceptance with God. The one hour labourer fared as well, and received as much as he that bore the burden and heat of the day; he must in his last stage, as well as in the first, fall helpless, worthless, and as unprofitable into the hands of an almighty, most merciful, most faithful, and never failing Saviour; and so leave every fruit to be taken notice of and brought forth in the great day, by him who makes the tree good, and who says, 'From me is your fruit found.' Here my little dear we are all complete, but in the law all condemned, in Adam all lost, at the bar of conscience oft culpable, in the sight of God all corrupt; but in the representative without fault before the throne, so God says, and so I believe.

Christ took our flesh into union with his divinity, and so we became one as foundation and superstructure, stock and branch, surety and debtor, man and wife are one; in him we lived and moved, in him we suffered and died, in him we rose, ascended, and sit down in heavenly places, and there God views us; in him he loves us, and by him he will display the riches of his grace in the eternal glorification of us all. In these views faith will stand her ground and maintain her hold against every assault, and all that I have written lays in these words: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the

word of their testimony," Rev. xii. 11; they trusted in Christ, and relied upon the word of God. My dear little one, farewell, I have sent my poor prayers to God before I began to scribble this. My best wishes to your father and sister. The salutation of parson Sack with his own hand, which is the token in every epistle; so I write, and so you believe.

Ever your's in Christ,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE SAME.

I MUST send a few scraps to my poor little ones, because they seem to be scattered upon the mountains as sheep that have no shepherd; but the chief shepherd fills both heaven and earth, so that there is no going from his spirit, or fleeing from his presence. He is near to them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Various are the visits that he pays to the children of men; sometimes he searches Jerusalem as with candles, to discover what they are, and to punish them that are settled upon their lees, in carnal security; "All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth

the reins and hearts," Rev. ii. 23. At other times he comes like a severe parent, "I will visit their sins with the rod, and their iniquities with scourges," Psal. lxxxix. 32; these are fears, troubles, reproofs and rebukes, terrors of mind, and lashes of conscience. "He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war," Isai. xlii. 13; this he does by comforting the broken and contrite hearted, and appearing to take no notice of them that are more at ease, and more careless; sometimes speaks a word in their favour, O visit me with thy goodness, saith the Psalmist; visit me early with thy mercy, and visit me with thy salvation. Blessed are they that feel their need of him, and that seek him with their whole heart; for though he seem for awhile to hide his face, yet surely, "The needy shall not always be forgotten, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever."

Come little ones take heart, be of good courage, for he loves them that love him, and they that seek him early shall find him. We robbed poor —— of almost all her heart, and left her nothing but her carcase and her clothes for B. and I must confess that she stole away one corner of mine, so that I am constrained to send the contents of it to R. Glad am I, that we are now of one heart, making up our happiness in one object, meeting in one centre, drawing in one yoke: Go on, my dear girls, and you will soon

find your hearts fixed, and your souls encompassed about with songs of deliverance. The religion of Jesus is the glory of our land, the cause of God, and the salt of the earth; it makes this world a bauble, one's own heart a principality, one's home a Bethel; it gives up our conversation to another world, it leads us to correspond with invisible realities, makes crooked things straight, and rough places plain. It makes a sick-bed easy, and the day of death to be better than the day of one's birth, because it introduces and paves the way to the wedding chamber, and shuts out all our rebellious infirmities, complaints, jealousies, disorders, and love sicknesses; "The inhabitants shall no more say I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity," Isai. xxxiii. 24.

The spirit of Jesus never leaves us without a friend in this world, nor without a father, nor without a token for good, nor without a companion that sticketh closer than a brother, for if the God of heaven be for us, who can be against us? And what can harm those who have got the God of Jacob for their portion? You must take this in the rough, for I am in a deal of business. My respects to father, and accept the same from

Your affectionate Friend
and willing Servant,
WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE SAME.

Monday Morning, 4 o'clock.

You know not how my soul was rejoiced to hear from my poor dear little ones. Forget you, or cease to pray for you, I cannot, I have you both in my heart to live and die with you, and indeed one part of the furniture of my house is missing, if neither of my little ones is in it; would have dropped a line before, but Mr. J. and several from L. came, as soon as one poor nurse child was gone. Mr. J—'s chapel is shut up to be painted, so that he has been here ever since last Tuesday.

My dear Redeemer is good to me, he hath been with me much in his own work, extending my views, supporting and enlarging my heart, equipping me with fortitude and becoming boldness, furnishing me with arguments, and clothing his word with power. One gentleman came last Saturday from G. and after hearing me in the morning he went off saying, this is what I wanted, so mightily grows the word of the Lord and prevails, and so extensively does God spread the fame of what he hath done for his poor and much despised servant. Whatever you do cleave to

him, he is a refuge for us; you may dive into his heart, into his mind, thoughts, counsels, purposes, and covenant, and even tell his thoughts respecting yourselves. O how sweet are thy thoughts towards me! how great is the sum of them. You may be by participation beforehand with the inheritance, for we are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; he is in our name and nature in the presence of God for us, as our forerunner, sponsor, and head, and we in him.

O my sweet ones, what has he done, and what has he in reserve for us? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived! But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." And the earnest is in our hearts, the foretastes of glory are the first-fruits of the Spirit; peace, love, joy, life, light, rest, and consolations, are blessings of an eternal date; all these will go in the soul to glory, these we shall carry with us through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and never lose them nor be without them world without end. Betsy do come to see me, you know not how much I long for you. I suppose your sister must stay at home, as both cannot be spared. My love to your father,

Ever your's, Dear Souls,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Thursday afternoon.

YOUR'S Dear Betty is just come to hand, and am glad to hear you are better, and so comfortably situated. Your father has been with us ever since we returned, he is pretty well, and talks of going to B. to'morrow. The best things remain just as they were, without any alteration or diminution. Our sole and only landlord is heir of all things, and all are ours in him, dealt out in weight and measure as need requires, and as the Spirit moves and exercises faith to plead, to crave, and to receive them. God is the bank of faith, and all his promises bank-notes, the Spirit enables us to carry them up for acceptance, and faith gets cash for them when it is wanted.

But faith has a better provision for the soul, and the just must live by faith on that, and most certain it is that faith is a most diligent, bountiful, liberal hand, to the spiritually poor and needy, for all that she can gather, reap, lay hold of, or get by begging, she gives it all to the soul; and many sweet scraps, crumbs, fragments and drops does she bring in. She is a bold beggar, and an eloquent pleader, and what she gets she will not

easily give up, being good at hold fast. Many battles does she fight with satan, and many renewed acts of her affiance in God, even when we have doubted of victory, and cast away our confidence, and foolishly sunk and given way in the field of action, concluding it was in vain to struggle any longer. But faith lifts up her head again and again, renews the attack, and keeps the field; she will have the last word in the argument, and give the last blow in the field, and carry off both the standard and the victory, and no wonder, for faith is born of God, and, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Oh! how high the extraction, born of God! and how strong the alliance! Faith makes Christ's strength perfect in our weakness; "Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

O what a warrior is faith, the word of God is her sword, the finished salvation of Christ her breastplate, and God her shield; the throne of grace is her armoury, the promises her encouragements, and the blood of Christ her fountain, in which she washes the garments of all her soldiers who are engaged in the fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. In this grace lays our claim to the heavenly treasure, "God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom promised to all them that obey him." As faith operates we must move,

every act of faith is one step towards the kingdom; "We walk by faith, and not by sight." The last step that she will take in us, is to resign her seat, the soul, to her own author and finisher; "The end of faith is the salvation of the soul." Providence Chapel is very full, Monkwell is shut up to be repaired, but we have had good times of late. We all wish to see thee. Naomi joins me in love.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

GLAD was I my dear child to hear that thou wast better, and that I had a ground of hope of seeing thee once more in the flesh. He wounds and his hands make whole, he brings down and lifteth up; he discovers deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death; he displays his wonders of love in the depths of human misery, and puts forth his power in human weakness, and causes all his goodness to pass before us, that we may discern the leadings of his providence, observe the work of his hands, and learn to follow him in his ways. By these means he captivates our thoughts, calls forth our

attention after him, and engrosses our affections to himself, while every religious awe at his judgments, and every mental respect paid to the operations of his hands, have a devotion and a tincture of divinity in them: "He that will observe these things, shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord:" and "When thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," Isai. xxvi. 9.

My dear child now sees what is meant by election, for she sees not all flesh in her present state, and must acknowledge that God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, as she had done no more than myself to merit it. But let me once caution thee to beware of the traps and snares of this delusive world; the heart will slide from the sinner's friend with a deal of ease, and in an imperceptible manner, but all the way back is against both wind and tide; one bask in momentary pleasure is succeeded with a month of woe. Every affection that wanders or is alienated from him, incurs his high resentment, and provokes the Lord to jealousy, which he is sure to requite by leaving us to burn in suspicion while others are indulged in our sight; we must most assuredly give place to one much weaker than ourselves, and with shame take the lowest room; this is the most painful sensation that ever impressed the human mind, it leads to desperation, and almost to madness. The

Lord is jealous of the heart and affections of his people, and will not suffer a rival in his praise, nor in their love.

I once knew a young woman upon whom the good work was newly begun, she began to loose her bonds and to get comfort, meekness, and contrition, the Saviour had just began to pay his saving visits to her, and a sweet simplicity took place. At this time a young man well settled in business, and much above her, saw her humility, attention, and diligence, and was smitten, and followed her, and offered himself to her; this was soon accepted, and during the courtship her comforts seem to increase. After some months past she was married, and as she thought more happy than ever, and her match she thought was a blessing from God; but after, like Samson she went out and shook herself, but wist not that the Lord was departed from her; he gave her her heart's desire, but sent leanness into her soul. She is now near her time with the fourth child, but has never lift up her head with heavenly joy since; the first match was interrupted, and has never come on since. They increase in riches, but she is racked with these suspicions, that God has put her off with a portion in this life. I shall watch over thee with godly jealousy, and hope we shall have joy of thee.

When the Lord condescends to visit us, and makes himself known to us, and when he indulges

us with nearness, freedom, and familiarity with him, then is the time to obtain promises, to make our calling and our election sure, to dive into his mind and will, to watch his hand and handy-works, to compare spiritual things with spiritual, to get every fear removed, every scruple cleared, every doubt dissolved, and every thing in the court of conscience amicably settled; but if these things be slighted and neglected at such a time as this, which is the time of our espousals, it is ten to one but our life hangs in doubt throughout the greater part of our pilgrimage. Be much in private, much in prayer, reading, and thinking, and may the Lord Jesus meet thee in all these. My love to Ann.

Ever thine in faith and affection,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

To the Elect Lady, whom I love in the truth, and for the truth's sake, that is with us, and shall be in us for ever.

And now I beseech thee, Lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we should love one another, for love is the ful-

filling of the law, he that loveth another fulfilleth the law. "God is love," this is his nature and essence, essential divinity is love; and where the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, that is a divine seed. His seed abideth in such, and that divine seed is charity, and charity suffereth long and is kind, charity hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things; charity thinketh no evil, is not puffed up, behaveth not itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, and rejoiceth in the truth, 1 Cor. xiii. Love is the bond of the everlasting covenant, which keeps the everlasting Father and his children, the King of kings and his subjects, the heavenly bridegroom and his bride together; and he that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him, 1 John v. 1. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him," 1 John ii. 10. Love emboldens us at the throne of grace; love enlarges the heart, and makes the face to shine; love softens a hard heart, and melts a stubborn mind; love casts out fear and torment, and makes our spiritual birth clear, for, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

Precious, precious, precious is the Son of God to me, the faithful, the stedfast, the unchangeable, tender, sympathetic, and never-failing lover of our souls; the light of our eyes, the strength of our heart, the shield of our help, the guide of

our life, the length of our days, the end of our faith, and the salvation of all our souls. Oh! Betty, who is like unto us! And as the Lord liveth we are the people, we are the fools, the enthusiasts, fanatics, the Antinomians of the day, but God is with us. "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake;" and "Blessed are ye when men cast you out, and separate you from their company, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you," John xv. 19. No company like that of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; no guardians like the angels of God, who are all ministering angels, sent forth to minister to them that are the heirs of salvation; no earthly company like that of our own thoughts, brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul," saith the Psalmist.

Meditation is conversing with the heavenly Bridegroom, and giving up our conversation to the upper world; it is getting out of self, and above the natural element of men; it is the ascension of the soul to God, and is attended

with divine realities; it is soaring aloft in open vision, while the illuminated understanding discovers things invisible to mortal sight. Heavenly-mindedness is life and peace; "They shall mount up as upon eagles wings, and see the king in his beauty, and the land which is very far off." In these pleasing flights the vail of ignorance on our minds opens, while the Spirit leads us from view to view, from glimpse to glimpse, and from one discovery to another, and from glory to glory. And here the inhabitants of the world look as small as grasshoppers, the earth as the drop of a bucket, or as the small dust of a balance, for says the soul, Where have I been, and what have I been about all my days, pursuing vanity, and depriving my soul of good. All these, Betty, are love tokens, love visits, earnests, pledges, foretastes, first-fruits, and all to assure us that the inheritance, the harvest, the glory that shall be revealed is eternally ours. Keep thy face Zionward, my dearly beloved, read, learn, mark, and inwardly digest, and thou wilt grow more in one month than all they at B. have done all their days. Ann is well, but wishes much to know how you do, and how her father is. Kind love to L. I sent a few lines some time ago, hope you received them, they were badly written, so I got a friend in the house to copy them, which I suppose surprized you. God bless thee,

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXIX.

TO MRS. B.

My Dear and Honoured Mother in the Lord Jesus Christ,

I WISH above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health. I have of late been exercised with legal bondage, with the blasphemous suggestions and foul embraces of the devil himself, with sad heart-risings and rebellions against God, and with envying the wicked; I have been grieved with them that are at ease, and blessing the carnally secure, calling the proud happy, and those in a false peace the blessed of the Lord, and and this I call turning things upside down.

The bible has sometimes been a sealed book; a famine among the texts, much prayer and little profit, the Lord at a distance, the door of mercy half open and half shut, the heart hard and soul dead; much to do, but no heart to labour. I have been put to it to pick out something, that I might cavil at God; but poorly in body and languishing in soul, wanting somebody to pity me, and sick of pitying myself, I wanted the breasts of consolation, but had nothing but a hard crust; I wanted a leading string, but he left me to stumble upon the dark mountains. I wanted

kisses, but there came stripes; I sought him, but I found him not; I called him, but he gave me no answer; I quarrelled at him, and he made me tremble at it; I opened my mouth against him, and he threw my reproach into my own conscience; I wished to move him, but he sat undisturbed. I sought occasions against him, I set one text to contradict another, and his hard dealings to contradict all his promises; I buried all his former mercies in oblivion, and magnified all his chastisements to mountains; I cavilled because I had not more faith, and at the same time falsely denied the faith that I had; I prayed for patience, and yet kept murmuring, for submission in the very act of rebellion. I begged for purity and holiness with nothing but lust in my head, and the works of the devil in my heart, "The law worketh wrath;" and the devil by the application of that holy law, works in us all manner of concupiscence, for without the law sin is dead, but at the approach of the law sin revives; God's law is God's severest rod.

Yesterday, shutting myself up the whole day in the chapel to have it out, fearing to be disturbed, for the devil and I was hard at it by the ears, and by the hair of the head, and fought in the walk way, up and down, till about the eleventh hour, then the fever left me, and satan skulked off like a dog that had burnt his tail, and is now gone to plague some other poor soul. At his

departure I felt the anointing, and a small ray from his blessed face, just enough to inform me that he was alive, and that I had a place still in his heart, but not to shew himself well pleased; some little resentment appeared on his face, and something of the same in his carriage, but the little was much prized, and much needed. I fell down and blessed him for the fiery trial, and loathed myself for the want of submission, and after some few hours went into the pulpit, and told them a pretty oily story from the ninth chapter of Zechariah, and the ninth verse, "Rejoice, shout, for thy King cometh unto thee," &c. My love to my true yoke-fellow. Mother, Adieu,

Thy dutiful Son,
and affectionate Friend in Jesus Christ,
W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXX.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Mother,

GRACE and peace be multiplied through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. I really wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, as I hope by this time that thy

soul prospereth. I have this morning read over afresh thy little epistle which is full of complaints, but I hope by this time that matters are mended, and thy heart a little more fixed. I have of late had some sweet thoughts upon Hebrews, the third chapter, verse the first; "Consider the apostle and high priest of our profession." Our high priest not only bore our sins, and made an atonement for us, or appeased the wrath of God in our behalf, and took his blood, the price of our redemption, into heaven with him, but he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

A high priest was to bear our names on his heart; he was likewise to bear our judgment; and thirdly, he was to bear the iniquity of our holy things, Read Exodus the twenty-eighth chapter. God has put us into the heart of Christ's love, he has chosen us in him and made us his charge, and he has loved us better than his own life; "Greater love hath no man than this." He has borne our judgment, the curse of the law, and the wrath of God for us, and appears in this his sacrifice within the vail, where he ever lives to make intercession for us, and who shall separate us from his love? And now he bears the iniquities of our holy things, even we ourselves are by the Spirit of God offered up as living sacrifices upon Christ, our altar and priest. "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be accepted, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost,"

Rom. xv. 16; and it is in God's beloved Son that we are made accepted, and it is the altar and priest that sanctifies the gift; we are God's gift to Christ, and he is made sanctification to us. In him we are wise, just, redeemed, washed, and made holy, and are complete in him; "Clean every whit," says Christ; and there is no spot in us, for in him we are without fault before the throne. Stick fast here my dear mother, and let the devil move us, or alter this performance of divine wisdom and goodness, if he can.

And observe further, that there is nothing comes from God to us, but through the mediator who has made peace, and through our high priest who has made the atonement by his sacrifice; and he having endured the curse, and appeased the wrath of God, we are secured from both, by the covenant, the oath of God, and the blood of Christ, so that even vindictive justice itself promises to forgive us, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness; so safe and secure are we in the heart and hands of the dearly beloved and ever blessed Son of God. And now mind what I say, our high priest is to bear the iniquity of our holy things, that is, sin cleaves to us, and to all our services; when we would do good, evil is always present with us. Deadness, unbelief, rebellion, self-seeking, hypocrisy, enmity, doubts, misgivings of heart, half-heartedness, backwardness, but nothing of all this shall ever

pass through the hands of our high-priest, in whose name and for whose sake we pray God to hear us.

All sin is satan's spawn, and it shall never ascend above the stars; satan is the prince of the power of the air, and above his realm his works shall never arise, because our priest and his offering are in the holy place. Christ upon his golden altar offers the incense of his sweet savour, sacrifice, and much grace, which perfumes the prayers of all saints; hence it is, that all our services are accepted: "Their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices," says God, "shall be accepted upon mine altar; and I will make them joyful in my house of prayer," Isai. lvi. 7. Therefore we should always pray and not faint, however dead, or else we undervalue the great high priest of our profession. I have oft prevailed when my heart has been stiffened by the devil and unbelief; and it is this way and no other, "Whatever you ask of the Father, ask in my name, and I will do it," says Christ; he so mends, alters, perfumes, and presents our poor imperfect performances, that we should not know them again, as they cry, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, thirsty, naked? &c. they were astonished at their own works when he brought them forth before them. Open your mind freely to your yoke-fellow, the devil often pushes off when he is discovered. Tender my love to John and

Mary, shall send them a kite when I can get the wings and tail put on.

God bless thee,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE SAME.

My Dear Mother,

GRACE and peace be with thee through our Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord. I was sorry to hear that thou art so poorly, and of my poor yoke-fellow's accident; but we are chosen in the furnace of affliction. The fiery trial always turns up, and discovers the evils of our inbred corruptions, these heave, boil, and blubber up, and we see what polluted, vile, and filthy worms we are; this is the dross and tin that swims upon the top, when satan's suggestions and legal bondage discover them, and God withdraws that we may know what is in our hearts. But bless his holy name, as soon as he returns again, all this scum is purged off, and we appear as white as snow in Salmon. But we soon, by one means or other, contract the same load of filth again, for as the sea casteth up its waters, so doth the heart its enmity and rebellion, and then comes on the fur-

nace again, because we are never effectually purged from the inbeing of sin, but from our evil frames; in the fire call upon me, saith the Lord, and when I deliver thee thou shalt glorify me. Thus the furnace puts a cry and energy in our prayers, and God's goodness in delivering fills the heart with joy and the mouth with praise; and they that have none of this where are they? Why, they are settled upon their lees, they are not emptied from vessel to vessel, their scent is not changed, their scent is in them; and what follows? Why, "I will search Jerusalem as with candles, and I will punish the men that are settled on their lees," Zeph. i. 12; these have no changes, and therefore they fear not God. The rod of God is not upon them, and he that spares the rod hates the son; then bless God for the furnace, bless God for afflictions, bless God for the rod, for by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of our spirits, so will God revive us and cause us to live. Mother, be of good cheer, no rod no sonship, no furnace no faith, no cross no crown. "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us an eternal weight of glory." "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him." Farewell, mercy and peace be with thee. So prays,

Thy Son and Servant,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXII.

TO MR. W. B.

My Dearly Beloved Friend and Brother in the Lord Jesus,

I was exceeding sorry to see my poor old companions in tribulation, both afflicted together; but it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom, and they that escape this path will never get there: "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him." "He brought me into the banquetting house, and his banner over me was love," says the spouse, Cant. ii. 4. Every time we are entertained, fed, or banquetted, the banner is over us, to let us know that wars are to succeed. John eats the little book, and it is sweet as honey, as all the promises are when the comforter applies them, but afterwards, says he, my belly was bitter; legal bondage, slavish fear, fatherly anger, and violent temptations often follow, which things are nauseous to the soul, as bitters are to the stomach.

But all the Saviour's garments smell of myrrh and aloes, the former a delightful smell, the latter a bitter taste, and with myrrh and aloes was his body embalmed for the tomb; all which is to teach us, that this delicious Lamb, our pass-

over, must be eaten with bitter herbs. What so sweet and joyful as his sweet face and blessed presence? And what so bitter as the loss of these? "The heart knoweth its own bitterness; and a stranger intermeddleth not with his joy," Prov. xiv. 10. "In the day of prosperity be joyful," for in this day the sun shines; "but in the day of adversity consider," for the sun is in an eclipse: "Why hidest thou thy face from me?" And must it be so? Is all to be bitter-sweets? Hush, do not murmur, bitters are wholesome though not pleasant, for they strengthen the stomach, and promote appetite; they that have no bitter herbs, bitter waters, nor bitter cups, have no real hunger or thirst after righteousness, nor after the bread of life, nor after the living God; they are full, and woe to them that are full, for they shall hunger; and woe to them that laugh, for they shall weep. But, Blessed are they that weep, for they shall laugh, and blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; and nothing do they mourn after so much, as after the love and presence of Christ: hence it is plain, no bitters no appetite, and no appetite no banquet; "He filleth the hungry with good things, and sends the rich empty away."

I long much to know how you are in health, do get —— to drop me a line; and I long much to see you, the Lord send you once more my way. Give my love and duty to Mother, I intend writ-

ing to her this week if the Lord permit. I long also to know how the house goes on. I have had a little furnace-work lately, but the Lord my God is still with his poor despised servant, and those who heat the furnace are scorched themselves. God bless thee and keep thee,

So prays,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Monday Morning, 6 o'Clock.

To Master, to Dame, &c. W. H. S. S. sendeth greeting, wishing grace, mercy, and peace, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I BLESS my God I have you all in my heart, making mention of you, and request for you in every prayer of mine, that you may stand fast in one spirit, and strive together for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

The Lord doth lay that branch of his vineyard in Sussex much on my mind, and I know that I shall travail again and again in birth for them, and you will see the effects of it more or less, and that soon. My soul is continually flying and hovering about the Welsh Ambassador, the

Vicarage, Lewes, Bolney, and other dark corners adjacent, and much liberty do I find in my soul in prayer; and sure I am that fervent prayer will never return void. My God is good to Israel, and he loves them that love him, and they that seek him early shall find him.

I had a good time yesterday, I laboured all the day on this text; "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all," Eccles ix. 11; and we had a very full house. My eldest son supped with me last night, he is occupying business in deep waters, and I am in hopes that in God's own time the vessel will come to its desired haven. You must be industrious now, and fetch up the lost time, and I will come again God willing, and who knows but he will give us a second benefit. But before that time my heart will pay a thousand visits to B. though you may not see it, yet so it is, the spirit of God's people often pass each other upon the road, in visiting each other; there is such a thing as being absent in body and present in spirit. O blessed mystery, blessed union, and blessed are the effects of it; bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God, made one in Christ, and one among ourselves, and perfect in one God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Tender my kind love to sister B. and my best wishes to the young folks, and to my true yoke-fellow and fellow-labourer when you see him. We got home safe, and in high spirits, and not without hopes that we had spread the savour of Christ's sweet name among poor sinners, for he condescends to make it manifest by the instrumentality of such despicable servants. And now may the Lord of all lords keep, guide, and preserve you all is, and I hope ever will be the hearty prayer of,

Dear Friends,

Your willing Servant in Christ Jesus,

WM. HUNTINGTON. S.S.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

My Dear Brother in Christ Jesus, Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee, through our own Lord God and Saviour, the Son of the Father in truth and love.

I HAVE heard by a line from —— that you have hurt your leg, which I am sorry for, as you are getting old, which if it become a running sore will not be easily healed. I long to know how the building goes on. I long likewise to know how

mother is, Betsy tells me she is poorly, which I am sorry to hear; I am afraid that this moving, building, and by and by a new house, will knock you all up together.

Next week I hope to finish my book, which has taken me almost three months, night and day. But blessed be the Lord, our own God in covenant, for he has wonderfully assisted me in this hard, difficult, and unfrequented path, which is so hard to cast up and to make plain, and which I have long wished to do, but was afraid to venture, fearing my judgment was not ripe enough, or that my understanding was too dark for the arduous task. My enemies in town are once more alive, another banquet it has pleased God to give them; Samson is now making sport for the philistines. A man who has plagued me with letters for near ten years, and who has wrote likewise to Mr. J. he and a few more have published a book, and the hand-bills are shouted off from chapel to chapel; this causes a great shout in the camp of the philistines. But the devil has oversbot the mark, for he has filled the authors of it with such infernal malice, that the book is worse than right down blasphemy. They have by what I can learn, almost made sport of the holy Comforter of our souls, and this kind of sport seldom lasts long.

The last scribbling enemy that wrote against me, for publishing a sermon on the times, was

buried last week, so I shall hear no more of him; and as for the world to come, we shall not be plagued with them there, at least I hope not. Some of my friends seem sadly concerned for me, but it rather pleases me than otherwise, my good God and Father does so kindly support his poor smutty servant. Nor do I doubt but ere long the indignation of God upon those men will be as conspicuous as their crimes, for their book is no less than the great transgression. God bless thee and keep thee,

So prays,

W. H.

LETTER XXXV.

TO MR. S. B.

I LONG to know how my friend is. As for the Doctor he is very feeble, so that you may retort the old proverb, Physician heal thyself. But the object of our hope is the living God, and our life is hid with Christ in him; this life no corruption can touch, no sin can infect it, no hypocrite can procure it, no devil can approach it. From God the fountain of life comes the second Adam, the quickening Spirit, and through him comes the Spirit of life and love, and under his sweet

operations faith, hope, and love spring up in the soul; and the life that lays in these three precious fruits raises us out of the regions of the shadow of death, and above the sting of death, and above the sentence of the law. "He that believeth hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." This is the greatest of all blessings; and what is this blessing? Why, it is the Spirit of the living God: "I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, my blessing upon thy offspring." This is the source of all good in God's family. All heavenly sensations and feelings; all longings, hungerings and thirstings after God and godliness; all our confessions, petitions, praises, or thanksgiving; all composure of mind, tranquillity of heart, or peace with conscience, springs from this fountain of life in us.

I do dearly and sincerely love this blessed and adorable Comforter, though I can discern, discover, and make out so little of his wonderful works. But this I know that all sensible sinners, who feel the plague of their own hearts, and the buffetings of satan, must sink in despair, and drown in perdition, unless he takes possession of the soul, seeing it is his work to dispossess the strong man, and to spoil his house; and thus to make the devil's cage his own temple.

The invalid to his Patient,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

I MUST send my poor friend a scrap, because he is an invalid, not fit to march, nor to attend the camp, and therefore he must abide by the stuff, or go on the baggage waggon. I am very stiff and weary this morning; I am too profuse and abundant when the well springs, and the cup overflows, feeling I am more than myself; but when it is over, I find I am frail man, encompassed about with infirmities. But even in this mortal mass there is a treasure, some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel, a living principle that cannot fail, sicken, decay, or die. No ray from the sun of righteousness can be extinguished, no incorruptible seed can corrupt. Let us cleave to our dear, and dearly beloved Lord; he is the heir of us, and the sole proprietor of us; he is every spring in us, and the fountain of life to us. They that have despised him are under their own sentence, and must bear their own burden; and we evidently see that all who depart from us are withered, decayed, and dried up like a potsherd.

God has founded Zion in the sacrifice of his Son, and he builds her up, and establishes her

by the faith of him, and faith feels all her springs of life in this city; salvation is her walls to all that are within, and all without the walls are dogs. "They that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God; their leaf shall be green, they shall bring forth fruit in old age to shew that God is upright," Psal. xcii. 13, 14. But is there a soul that has departed from us, that has the least moisture or verdure upon them? Or does God appear the health of their countenance? No. Carnal enmity and hatred is fixed within, they hate Zion and are desolate; the evident tokens of perdition are in them, and their countenance reflects the sentence. But the Lord is with us. Remember me to Betty. I hope to see you this week.

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

I AM sorry to hear that my poor friend is so ill again, but the decays of the body are often the health of the soul; "But though our outward man perish," says Paul, "yet the inward man is renewed day by day," 2 Cor. iv. 16. Our breath is in our nostrils and must go forth, and that very

day all our evil thoughts perish. But where God breathes upon the soul, there the spirit of life enters, and there spiritual bread, the hidden manna, the best wine, the fatted calf, and the paschal lamb are craved, relished, savoured, eaten, digested, and concocted, and no where else. Blessed are they that hunger, and blessed are they that thirst, for they shall be filled. When God quickens us, he revives us by the fruits of his Spirit, and in these fruits his divine life is hid. He lives in our thoughts, minds, affections, and conscience, and will never resign his residence to any; and he will cheer us, entertain us, employ our thoughts, and comfort our hearts, according as he is entertained, attended to, and pleased; and if displeased with our neglect or inattention, he lets our faith and hope come to a low ebb, and will make us feel our need before we feel his indulgent fulness.

If my dear friend's gout was of the same class of disorders with mine, a paper kite, or a box of golden balsamic pills might give relief; but his is not in the pocket, but in the feet. But blessed be God, faith can travel when the feet are confined with pain; and God can come to us to make the bed in our sickness, if he does not keep sickness from us. I long to see my fellow-sufferer, gouty folks can feel for each other's infirmities, and our high priest can feel for us both. Kind love to Betty.

S. S.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

My Dear Friend,

Our God filleth all space, and is near to all that feel after him. He transacts all the grand affairs of his kingdom in the court of conscience; to that court the Lord's ministers commend themselves; into that court the word comes, and makes it good and honest. Here the precious blood of sprinkling speaks pardon, peace, and reconciliation. The prince of peace, sways his sceptre here, he is enthroned here in his own love; hence charity out of a pure heart and a good conscience, is the end of the commandment. Afflictions are to disturb, disquiet, and to stir up this court, that things amiss, things neglected, and things forgotten may be brought forth to the light, be sifted up, and canvassed over.

And there is no settling the accounts without the blessed surety of the New Testament; he is the chief speaker, and sovereign ruler here; his atonement is our pardon; his faith is the manifestation of our sonship; and the sentence of justification by his righteousness, is passed in this court. Watch, and you will see these

things going on, and as light discovers, pardoning grace will remove what is amiss. He sits as a refiner by the furnace, and he is the purger and the purifier of all his priestly family. He has not chosen us in the furnace, in order to desert us when in the fire; he is our all in all. Love to Betty, and accept the same from,

S. S.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

My Dear Brother and Sister in Christ,

Can only say I received yours, being busy in moving, and fitting the nest, which takes too much time, and is too much trouble, to one engaged in such a warfare as hath fell to my share. But the goodness, the bounty, the unexpected and undeserved mercies and favours of my God in this removal are too great to be mentioned; they are so great and so conspicuous, that my enemies have almost filled a column in the newspapers with the accounts, insomuch that it seems to be a revival of the old confession, "They said among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them," Psal. cxxvi. 2. Those that have watched for

my halting, and those that have predicted my fall, my beggary, &c. are, Sanballat-like, much cast down, and I think that some of them will soon go beside themselves, for my friends have given me a handsome coach, and a pair of able horses, which are sufficient to do all the work of my little farm. I am not worthy of the least of his mercies, for I entered into his service with one shirt, and now I keep my carriage; and this is the way that God raiseth up beggars from the dung-hill. They that abhor my soul walk on foot, while Mordecai rides to the grief of all that hate him; surely God honours those that honour him, and knows them that put their trust in him.

My soul blesses my good God for the defeat in Ireland; the Jacobins hang down their heads, they are with child, they are in pain, they bring forth wind, they work no deliverance in the earth, nor are the ruling powers fallen; the foundations of the earth are still in course, and we enjoy both our lives and our property. God bless you both; a good journey, and safe return. So prays,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XL.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Friend,

I AM glad to hear the good tidings of our Perfumer, and that he gains by trading. Incorruptible grace will stand the fire; vessels of gold and silver consume not, though vessels of wood and earth will. He calls us gold when we go into the furnace, and indeed if we were any thing less, we should never come out. I long to see our Perfumer here, perfumed with myrrh, and frankincense, and all the powders of the merchant; smelling of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces; these will make his heart glad. However, one grain of faith, or beam of hope, is worth more than a million worlds. Every influence or operation of the Holy Spirit, every grace that he imparts, and every fruit of his, is incorruptible seed, that shall live and abide, being in the sight of God of great price: these come down from above, and teem, aspire, and spring up that way, as to their own original fountain and source. This treasure is lodged in the souls of all saints, a treasure from the head, which makes us so many parts of himself, members of his body. Oh, infinite depths! profound mysteries! My friend can hear me very well in the vestry, if he likes to come. God bless you.

THE COAL MERCHANT.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE SAME.

Cricklewood. Thursday.

I HAVE been this morning begging of the best of all Benefactors, to remember my poor friends, and I believe that it was the Lord that set me at it, and it was the same that helped my infirmities when at the work, and gave sweetness and delight, pleasure and love in the heavenly occupation. I have begged with more than human power, and all power is from above, and he does put it forth, and manifest it in the souls of much despised reptiles. Of all sensations, enjoyments, pleasures, or entertainments; of all delights, amusements, refreshings, or comforts; nothing is ever once to be named, or mentioned in competition with the humbling, softening, meekening, composing, and becalming influences of the most holy, harmless, innocent, and inoffensive Spirit of all grace, life, light, and love. And all his operations lead and direct to the great atonement, and to the all-prevailing, and ever acceptable mediation of Jesus. This is the saint's sweet repose, his refuge and his rest, his safety and his sure defence.

I am in comfortable hope that the Holy Spirit will mingle his softening influences, and his quickening operations with my friend's afflictions, and if he does, the inward man will find support to sustain the outward man's decays. And of this be assured, that conscious peace is the best sick bed, and love the best pillow; faith is the best bedstead, and the Lord's righteousness the best covering; the Holy Spirit is the best nurse, and the Lord Jesus the best physician. The joy of God is the best candle, for this burns the brightest in the darkest night; the midnight cry will not extinguish it, nor the storms of Sinai blow it out. This is what is called a bad spirit, and Antinomianism, but I am more than sure that it came down from heaven, nor have I a doubt but to heaven it will reascend. Love to your dame concludes me,

Your affectionate Friend,

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XLII.

TO MR. W. B.

Church Street, Paddington.

Dear Brother in Christ,

I THIS day received your's, being the second instant. I am at this time a close prisoner of war. Last week I went to visit a little camp

of the saints in the country, where the aid of an old veteran soldier was much needed; but being poorly in health, having a bad cold and fever, I became so hoarse in the field of action, that my commands and orders could not be heard, and therefore I was throwed up upon the baggage waggon, and sent home to the tent as a dumb man in whose mouth are no reproofs, where I have remained now seven days, while my little army is scattered all over the great metropolis; but they find neither present pay nor good quarters, and then they come thick and threefold to enquire after the health of the old commander, being more sensible of his worth by a sensibility of their want. I hope to be out next Lord's day, if God permit.

These often infirmities crawling so often upon me, make me look to the better country, and sicken my soul to this stage of trouble, on which God has so often written what I have often read with grief, namely, That all is vanity and vexation of soul. But God hath provided some better thing for us, a better country, and a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; in this country the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick, the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquities, which is the cause of all sickness, distress and trouble, and the foundation of all misery. Dear friend, farewell. My kind respects to spouse

and son, and accept the humble acknowledgments of,

Your willing servant in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

Beloved in the Lord, my Father and your Father, my God and your God,

I AM returned from one of the most prosperous and successful journies that I ever took, so I believe and so I have room to hope, by the multitude of perishing souls, wounded spirits, and invalids that found me out, followed me, and wept over me. Such a famine I never saw, and especially where my lady's men, dead baptists, and arminians reside; but my poor scribblings have wonderfully discovered them, and out of three places fairly routed them, till they will have no more to do with them.

How calamitous is their case who have no shepherd to overlook, to gather, nor to feed them; but they shall never finally deceive the treasures of divine love, the objects of God's choice, the purchase of Christ's blood, and the trophies of his victory. He will take the prey from the mighty, and the spoil from the strong, for these are the travail of his soul, the pillars of his truth, the subjects of his realm, the retinue

of his majesty, and the revenue of his empire. The dear Lord was with me of a truth, and I could almost say with Job, that, "When the eye saw me it blessed me, and when the ear heard me it gave witness to me;" but I must drop here, for these things will call for stripes: "Not I, but the grace of God that was with me."

I long to know how you all do, and how the house upon the rock goes on; where you are, whether moved or not, and if not when you do move; how John, Mother, Mary, and Betsy do, and how you prosper within; whether the new house contributes toward the new heart or not. I have for some time had this text upon my mind, and have watched and narrowly pursued it; "Follow after righteousness, charity, peace, meekness, faith, patience," &c. and blessed for ever be a faithful God, I have not sought nor followed in vain. Cheer up my dearly beloved and true yoke-fellow, the crown is before us, and who shall deprive us of the conquest for which we fight, or take the prize for which we run? Not them that run in a wrong path, nor that strive for mastery in unbelief. Pray give my love to all the family, and to his Excellency when you see him. The Lord of all lords bless, preserve, and keep both you and your's, is, and ever will be the prayer of,

W. H. S. S.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-st. Oxford-st. London.

GLEANINGS OF THE VINTAGE;

OR

LETTERS

TO THE SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST;

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE.

PART IX.

There shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. Isa. xxiv. 13.

The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it. Isa. lxv. 8.

LONDON:

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1814.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

CHRISTIAN READER,

I HOPE shortly, in the Lord's strength, to make good my promise to thee in giving forth from the press a sermon of my late Parent, delivered early in the year one thousand eight hundred and twelve; and that thou mayest not be at a loss to know how to distinguish it from others, it will appear under the title of 'Napthali, or Holy Wrestling.'

I have lately been indulged by Mr. S. Turner, of Sunderland, with copies of a few letters written by my father to him and others, and which appear in this; they clearly point out the union that subsisted between them, that his confidence in him was not weakened, and loudly proclaim to the church of God one instance, in which the sower of discord among brethren could not prevail, so as to work a division.

I should consider myself wanting, both in gratitude and respect, to this Minister, were I not to inform you that Mr. Turner hath lately favoured the church with three sermons delivered by him, from that weighty reproof of the Lord Jesus, John v. 40; "Ye will not come to me

that ye might have life;" and which the Author hath emphatically entitled, 'Life in Christ for every Willing Soul.'

E. HUNTINGTON.

65, High Street,
June 6, 1814.

LETTERS

WRITTEN BY THE LATE

Rev. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To S. TURNER, Minister of the Gospel.

Helmsley.

My Dear Son, grace and peace be with thee through our Lord Jesus Christ.

YOUR second epistle came to hand, but I am a man of much business. The offence of the cross always attends the spiritual man, and the work of the Spirit; and it is nothing else but light and life that exasperates satan, and he alarms his allies and auxiliaries. Where the cross gives no offence satan sustains no injury, because there is no translation of sinners from the kingdom of satan into that of God's dear Son, and of course darkness and death bear rule, for satan's reign is in darkness and death. The cross of Christ will support itself, and defray its own expences; the devil labours to make it our shame, but God has made it our glory. To men of sin it is foolishness, but to men of grace it is the wisdom of God in a mystery. The cross is satan's destruction, and man's salvation. The secret council of God from eternity is brought to

light by it, and is seen in it; and they labour to shame the counsel of the poor, because Christ crucified is his refuge. All flesh hath corrupted his way, all the powers of our soul being corrupted from the way of love, which was God's way when God created man; but enmity conceived under the operation of satan, altered the whole course of nature, and this corruption or perversion of nature makes a cross within; and all that adhere to satan's interest, being the serpent's seed, make a cross without. But the cross is lined with love, and will never wring the shoulder but only when self-will, pride, consequence, or self-seeking strive to bear rule. The old man is often galled, but the new man never complains of the cross.

Some time ago some persons at S——— wrote to me about this L——, but as I so much disliked him I would not see him. Soon after this a creditable man called on me, and wished me to see him; I assigned my reasons for not seeing him; however I found that this man knew nothing of him, but he was applied to, to introduce him to me: I therefore permitted him to come, and let him go on and talk as long as he pleased, but there was no harmony or consistency in any thing he said; and I am fully persuaded that he is an utter stranger both to his own heart and to God also.

His asserting that I have sent out so many

preachers is absolutely false, for strictly speaking I never sent out one. Tom Smith had preached long before ever I knew him, nor was he ever a member with us. Vessey never belonged to our church, and had preached long before ever I knew him. L—— that went to G——, came from ———, and was at Simpson's Academy, but never belonged to us. A—— had preached two years at Margate, but it was unbeknown to me, though I have no doubt but he is a child of God.

Nor did I send you out, for you had spoke in public before I knew it. I recommended you to Helmsley, and the letter I sent is still there; nor do I repent of it: and if any of the friends at Helmsley wish for L——, let them dismiss you, I will bear your expences to London, and engage to employ you elsewhere. Send me L—'s address in your next, and you will oblige,

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

July 16, 1807.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Friend,

It is hard work now for me to write, my right hand has forgot its cunning. The nerves

catch it up, or draw it aside, so that it becomes disobedient and unmanageable. I have also got a cold and a slow fever. The City Chapel being low, damp and cold, it doth not suit the infirmities of old age. I often think of my dismission from the field of action, and hope for an honourable discharge and an eternal pension on the footing of grace, and according to the promise in Christ; and these things prompt me to collect my evidences and good qualifications together, as is the usual method of all self-righteous persons.

1. I greatly confide in the singular piety of my forefather, Abraham, who was God's friend, and whose blessing is come upon me through faith: but above all the everlasting Father, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. My mother also was a most venerable and honourable matron, the handmaid of the Lord in the best sense, I mean the heavenly Jerusalem, who is the mother of us all. So much for my pedigree.

2. I thank my God also that I am not as other men, for I am the chief of all sinners. Nor am I like that poor publican, for I can lift up my eyes to God with pleasure, which he dared not do.

3. I can say to the most refined pharisee, and even to the god of this world, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou,"

and yet even this is not a smoke in the Lord's nose, nor a fire that burns to his displeasure.

4. I can look back upon a well-spent life also, believing in my conscience that Christ lived a life of unspotted obedience for poor sinful me.

5. I can bless God for an honest and good heart, being persuaded that the Lord has taken away the stony heart, and given me an heart of flesh, and that Christ dwells in it by faith, therefore it must be good.

6. I do comfort myself with my own righteousness, being more than sure that I have received the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness; and what God gives me that I call my own, for not as the world giveth, giveth he unto us.

7. I have obtained a good name in the world in spite of all mine enemies, a new name which malice with all her venom cannot spoil me of. God predestinated me to the adoption of a son; the Spirit of God has cried Abba, Father; and Christ has given me power in faith to become one—this is the new name which the mouth of the Lord, not man, shall name. Yea, more, many men eminent for piety, who have spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, have called me a child of God. In all these instances it appears to be a new name, and in all these ways the mouth of the Lord names it, and no other.

8. I am constrained also to acknowledge,

that God's free Spirit has made me a willing and loyal subject of Christ in the day of his power, so that I do engage and abound in the work of the Lord most freely, willingly, and cheerly, under the operation of a free Spirit, which greatly inclines my heart to this doctrine of free will.

9. I do declare that no man shall stop me of this boasting in all the regions of Great Britain, viz. that I am a member of the church of England; for she says, The church of God is a company of faithful men, and that God hath constantly decreed, before the foundation of the world was laid, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation as vessels made to honour. This God himself has made known to me, for I have prayed to God the Holy Ghost to have mercy upon me a miserable sinner, and he has heard my prayer, and given me a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, and a most thankful remembrance of his death. These are some few of the evidences, tokens, and good qualifications that I am scraping together against that day, to serve as a cordial, a prop, and a support in my conflict with our last enemy.

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

P. S. I should be glad to see my dear friend. I am going to move to Pentonville.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

My dear Turner,

Our Chapel will soon be ready to open, and Lewes is at present without a minister; I wish you would come up to town and stay awhile. If you are troubled with the gout in your pocket, you are welcome to ten pounds as soon as you come; I long much to see you. I have been a round into Sussex and Kent, and am but just returned: and surely the good Lord has been with me, and still blesses, owns, and gives testimony to the word of his grace; while those that contend for Moses, get nearer and nearer the Mount, more and more benighted, more useless, more barren, more dry, and more dead. But we know who is the true light, the resurrection and the life.

Oh Turner! let him in your labours be all in all, for such the word of God reveals him, and nothing less; and this is the work which God will own, confirm, and seal, and no other.

God bless you. Excuse haste.

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

My dear Friend,

I AM still in the bricks and mortar, or you would have heard from me before. More than three months continual bustle has fell to my share, but nothing I hope will ever be sufficient to remove my heart from my God, or my God from my heart. But I am so beset with intruders and builders, that if I do not awake up by four in the morning I cannot settle my books, take stock, or count my cash, and without this it is in vain to occupy till he comes, because I know not whether I gain or lose by trading. I know I began with two talents, and I am more than sure thus to be contented with godliness is great gain, because the Holy Spirit, his grace, influences, and operations, together with the benefits of Christ's death which he applies, is the only power and real substance of what the scriptures call godliness. And what can be greater gain than a divine person, who is the breath of our nostrils, our animator, and eternal comforter? We are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and he is the beauty of holiness, and is that holiness that becomes this house for ever. Upon him my soul waits for instruction, for light, for help, for

proper frames of mind, for proper words in the work, and for power to clothe them and make all effectual. In spirit and in truth must all true worshippers worship, for the Father seeketh such, and no other, to worship and to adore him. This is our inward glory, and our furniture for every good work. I am glad that you find yourself at home among my dear friends, and that you are enlarged among them. Tender my love to any that may enquire after the Coal-heaver. Our new chapel is not only full but runs over.

Your's most affectionately,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER V.

TO F. A.

Helmsley.

My Dear Friend in Christ Jesus, Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee, through the mediation of the Son of the Father in truth and love.

I AM now in my little Cabin, on board the Providence, bound for the Cape of Good Hope and the fair havens. In this little delightful cell I have had many sweet and bitter hours, sweet indulgences and cutting desertions. But so it must be, the paschal lamb was eaten with bitter

herbs; John's little book was sweet and bitter, and so was Ezekiel's roll; and all the garments of the Son of God smell of myrrh and aloes; and with myrrh and aloes was the Son of God embalmed at his burial. The heart knows its own bitterness, and the stranger intermeddleth not with its joy; the latter is a day of prosperity in which we are bid to be joyful, the former a day of adversity in which we are to consider; God hath set the one over against the other.

It is well known that nothing is so salubrious, nothing so strengthening to the stomach, nothing promotes appetite like wholesome bitters, or bitter herbs. The believer goes in and out in the exercise of faith, and finds pasture. How sweet is the cup of salvation and the cup of consolation after a taste of the bitter cup, in which is sin and fear, guilt, shame, wrath and death. But this bitter cup, with all its dregs, fell to the share of the surety of the better testament; our sipping of it gives us a fellowship with him in his sufferings; it is planting us together in the likeness of his death; it is a crucifying us together with him. It serves to furnish us with sympathy; we look at him whom we have pierced and mourn, while a sense of his dying love, mixed with a sense of his sufferings, this, this melts us down in love together, and joins us to him, and makes us one with him! while the soul-transforming power and influence impress the image of the heavenly

Adam on the soul! "Changed," saith Paul, "into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;" and the more we look to him, the more this transforming work goes on. Enlivening rays, refreshing dews descend; while humble acknowledgements, and grateful praises ascend.

The fountain of life furnishes the river of pleasure, and the streams water the little hills of Zion, and make glad the city of God. "I will water them every moment," saith God, "and make their souls as a watered garden," Isai. lviii. 11. And when the countenance of the sun of righteousness is lifted up upon us, it exhales all the moisture, and draws it back again in acts of spiritual devotion. God is the fountain of living waters above, and grace is a springing well below; and as the fountain feeds the spring, so the spring rises up and sends back to God its overflowings. The heart of the wise is a well-spring of life, and the words of wisdom a flowing brook. "Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it."

Farewell. Grace and peace be with thee and all friends, so prays

The Sinner Saved,

W. H.

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Friend,

I RECEIVED yours by the hand of Mr. C. and am glad you are well. I am still in the land of the living, though the devil is sorely vexed at it, for God still gives testimony to the word of his grace. His word runs and is glorified, and satan will not part with his captives easily, and it is a sore grief to him that any one is raised up to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. He has pursued me with unremitted violence for thirty-three years, sometimes by all the fiery darts he can muster, and the most foul temptations; and sometimes by worldlings, impostors, apostates, heretics and hypocrites; but God blasts all their plans, mars their counsels, frustrates the tokens of liars, carries the counsel of the froward headlong, and makes diviners mad. Four or five of my worst enemies have been lately cut off as the foam upon the waters; but having obtained help of my God, the Coalheaver continues to this day. Many weapons have been formed against me, but they do not prosper: God has known my soul in adversity, and he has delivered me, and justified me, and accepted me in his dear Son, and revealed his Son in me;

and this work is done for ever, and stands fast, and will never more be sifted up, canvassed over, nor will it, nor need it be repeated again. Whom God justifies, them he also glorifies; once washed, for ever clean: "He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit," John xiii. 10; and in the wedding robe for ever just—— pardon makes us nigh, and the best robe makes us one with him.

Sometimes I feel myself getting dry and unsavoury, having ploughed and sowed, harrowed and rolled, dunged and limed so long upon one part of the Lord's husbandry; this makes me fret and fear, pray, watch and wait, for my soul dreads withering into a mere form; and when the new cruse, the oil, the salt, and the springing well rise up afresh and flow out, then at it I go again as long as fountain, or spring-well, or pool, river or stream, dew or rain last; and then again I seem to be dried up like a potsherd, no moisture either in the fleece or in the floor. Then I pray and a terrible answer in righteousness comes, and into the furnace I go, cavilling, kicking, murmuring and fretting till I get to the bottom; when the anchor of hope forbids any further descent, then up I come meek and soft, weeping and rejoicing, blessing and praising, kissing and hugging till I have killed all my comforts, or hugged them to death, and then like

Samson shorn of his locks, I fret and repine.
My love to all that favor the Son of God.

Ever yours,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER VII.

TO T. O.

Helmsley.

Dear Tommy,

"THE winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;" and this is the time that cripples, invalids, and old age with her crutches creep out of their holes; and it is the poor, the halt, the lame, the maimed and the blind, that are invited to grace the marriage feast of the Lamb of God —— yea, these mystic members compose the bride, the king's daughter, and the Lamb's wife: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." Peace in the conscience is the soul's bridal shoes, faith is the bride's hand, the actings of faith or the exercises of it are the bride's fingers, and when faith can act on the love of God so as to bring it in, love is the soul's bridal ring. Imputed righteousness put on by faith is the soul's wedding garment, the Spirit and his grace are the church's inward glory,

and love to the truth is the chain of her neck; a sense of pardoning love is her lamp of salvation, and joy is the oil in her vessel: "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked is put out."

The incarnation of Christ is his espousing our nature, and regeneration is our open espousals to him; he is by the former flesh of our flesh, and by the latter we are joined to the Lord and are one spirit with him. And, "He that loveth is born of God;" and to desire him, (Christ) above all, is love in the smoking flax, for, "The desire of a man is his kindness;" but, love in the joy of it is love not in the smoke, but in the heat and in the flame. Pray how does Mrs. O. do? Tell her that the troubler of Israel, the Coalheaver, the Doctor, sends his kind love to her, wishing her all peace, health, wealth, and prosperity, long life and liberty, and the enjoyment of that sun which never goes down. All hail! and good success to us farmers. God speed the plough, and bless the seed sown, and increase the fruits of righteousness by settling the furrows, watering the ridges, blessing the springing, and crowning the harvest.

Amen and amen says,

W. H.

LETTER VIII.

To I. L.

Winchester Row.

Dear Friend,

You have forgot your promise of writing to me, but I suppose satan tells you silence best becomes the miserable. However I would not be of the devil's privy council, nor keep the secrets of his infernal cabinet; depend on it he never will prophesy any good of you, therefore listen to none of his temptations, for he knows nothing of God's purpose concerning your final state. He is the enemy both of God and man, a murderer, and aims at nothing but the increase of his own broken kingdom, and can never be divided against himself. Remember, Christ, and him alone, hath made satisfaction to injured Justice by putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and hath made peace by the blood of his cross for us; there is no other satisfaction to be made, that work is finished: and by his spotless obedience to the law he hath fulfilled all righteousness in our name, Son of man, in our nature, "He was made flesh;" thus a righteousness wrought out for us, and by the gospel brought nigh to us. The gospel knows of no

other righteousness than this, nor is any other ever to be wrought out for our justification before God.

If thou art patching this spotless robe with thy old cloth, they will never agree, the rent will only be made worse, and so you will feel it. The law itself forbids a garment of linen and woollen together. You seem to me to be a friend to the devil, for instead of resisting you rather invite him; and instead of fighting you start aside, cast away your bow, give up all confidence, refuse all comfort, and in effect say, take me devil. I know a choice man of God, who in his distress of soul, desired God to damn him that he might know the worst of his state; what is this but praying against God's decree, and desiring to meet the devil half way? I know a woman who, in an hour of temptation had listened to satan till she was quite sick of it, cried out and said, I will never believe I shall be damned till I am in hell; she fought more like a man than a woman, but you fight more like a child than a man. The Lord knew that we all were transgressors from the womb, and are bent to backslide; but he has promised to heal our backslidings and love us freely.

The Lord has set his long forbearing mercy against our propensity to offend, his slowness to anger against our hourly follies, his riches against our deep poverty, and his abounding grace

against our abounding iniquity; therefore be of good comfort, arise, he will yet call thee, only believe and thou shalt be made whole. You will not find Christ to cast you off easy, he knows our weaknesses, and has been tempted in all points like unto us, yet without sin, and is able to succour them who are tempted; therefore, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath a recompense of reward." "Be of good cheer, arise, he calleth thee." "Only believe, and thou shalt be made whole."

Tell your sister I have enquired after her place of servitude, and am informed it is a very good one, which I am very glad to hear of. Tell her to beg of Christ to take possession of her heart, he will have no less; that he desires for his habitation; and when he takes possession of that he will keep all others out. He yields up the contrite heart to none; here he sways his sceptre, and grace reigns over sin; here he writes his laws, and erects his kingdom for ever; here he gives his keys and sets his seal; all his springs are here. Blessed is that heart that is governed by such a sovereign, and for ever blessed be that King who deigns to dwell in such a palace. Fare thee well, all grace be with thee, while I remain,

Thine in the Lord,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

This has been begun almost three weeks ago, but time failed.

LETTER IX.

I THANK my kind friend for all his good tidings, they comfort my heart. But —— is at my former work, envying the visions of some, and the penny of others. This part of your letter furnished me with a text for last Monday night, take the substance of it. It is the Lord's promise that he will manifest himself to his children, John xiv. 21. This manifestation is sometimes corporeal, as among the Jews before his death, and to his disciples after his resurrection; they saw him and handled him.

There is a spiritual manifestation in open vision to the enlightened understanding: this John saw, the Lamb slain on the throne, and in the robe of his glorified humanity among the candlesticks. Isaiah saw him in dyed garments, and in the sixth chapter on his throne of glory; Daniel also, and Ezekiel too as priest, in the ninth chapter, and as king in the first chapter, and in the eleventh. But although such a sight is most desirable, yet this, abstractedly considered, is not salvation; the kingdom of God stands in power, nor does faith stand in sights, but in the power of God. Balaam's

vision was most illustrious, but not attended with the power of grace; nor do I believe that the elders of Israel fared any better, they saw him, but felt not his power, for, "Upon the nobles he laid not his hand," Exod. xxiv. 8—12. Blessed are they that have not thus seen, and yet have believed. I saw him, but sight of itself is not sufficient, my salvation was felt; pardon, love, joy and peace flowed in—guilt, fear, bondage, condemnation and wrath vanished; when faith, hope, and rest flowed in, and evangelical repentance flowed out.

He promises to manifest himself to us, but we must not limit his promise. A thing may be manifested by sight, to the ear also, and to the feeling; weigh and compare the following texts: God makes manifest the savour of his knowledge, 2 Cor. ii. 14. It is life eternal to know God in his dear Son. The mystery of Christ is manifested by the power of his word, Col. iv. 3. 4. Any one benefit of Christ's death to the conscience, is to us a proof of God manifest in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. There is a manifestation of the truth, 2 Cor. iv. 2; and truth is to make us free. There is a manifestation of God the Father's name, John xvii. 6; and what that name is, see Exodus xxxiv. 5—7; and there is a manifestation of the Spirit, which is for our profit, 1 Cor. xii. 7. These, and all these are Christ; he came that we might have life, by faith, by

hope, by love, by the Spirit; and by the word of truth he dwells in us. And such souls are manifestively the epistles of Christ, having faith, hope, and peace, in a tender, feeling conscience, which is what is meant by the fleshly tables of the heart.

Let this suffice, and be sure of this, that the greatest blessing under heaven is divine life; this Christ came to give, and let this be our comfort in our affliction, his word has quickened us. I beg my duty to S. my kind love to Mr. B. also to our friend E. who labours with us in the word and doctrine.

S. S.

LETTER X.

Dear Friend,

THREE of yours lay by me unanswered, but having this cold weather but little use of a pen, and never having been a master of it, it becomes now no small difficulty. But man in his first birth is born to trouble, and if regenerated he is a brother born for adversity; his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn. But every thing that drives us to God and deadens us to the world, is for the

soul's good; troubles keep the faith in exercise, and the soul in motion; prayer is at work, and this empties the vessel of its unhallowed burthen, till the devil comes with a fresh cargo. How nearly allied are the devil and man's carnal mind; and if a man knows and adores his Saviour, who is the saint's rock and the sinner's stumbling block, what thousands of engines will satan employ to make the cross heavy.

I am surrounded with the most bitter enemies in the ministry, and in profession, besides the treachery and deceitfulness of pretended friends, who quench the spirit of love, and wriggle themselves out of all concern and prayer for them that are near to me; and yet in the midst of all this I have uncommon success, beyond all that I have ever seen; this is some comfort, though they are increased that trouble me: yet they do not pass altogether unnoticed of God who fill their sermons with invectives against me. And this I have long observed, that those who set themselves against ruling powers, are in the general enemies to the godhead of him by whom they rule. But there is an end of all this, and the expectation of hope shall not be cut off, and I must lay at anchor. Farewell.

W. H.

LETTER XI.

God still blesses the antinomian, and many rage, storm, and curse the more. Oppression exercised upon the household of faith, fills the measure apace, and when that is full go they must; but all these secret things will be made known and come abroad, and our eyes will see their works and their rewards. Both God and conscience, wise virgins and foolish, churchmen and dissenters, articles and homilies; the examinations of the clergy, and the subscriptions of dissenting teachers; yea, law and gospel, all, all with one voice approve and acquit, justify and admire, sanctify and glorify the men in whom is found that faith that worketh by love. These are the good things found toward the Lord God of Israel.

God bless you,

S. S.

LETTER XII.

TO MISS D.

Dear Friend, Fellow-sinner and Fellow-sufferer, Grace and peace be multiplied through our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus.

Cricklewood House, Edgware Road.

Report tells me, that thou art fallen into the hand, and under the rod of God; that as the

searcher of all hearts, and the trier of reins, he is now displaying his omniscience in thee, in making you know your past life, your vain thoughts, and the plague of your own heart, in its enmity, in its impenitency, in its unbelief, and in its rebellion; its guilt, its filth, its deceitfulness, its frailty, its fear, and its shame; and God grant that this report may be true. And if true, all the characters of God's darling and eternal Son, all his anointings and appointments are calculated, suited, ordained, and intended for such miserable sinners, in these their perilous cases; "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring." The Spirit is upon me, because he hath sent me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to open the prison to them that are bound, and to set at liberty them that are bruised, Luke iv. 18; to comfort all that mourn in Zion, to feed the hungry, and to heal the sick; "The whole need not the physician:" and wo to them that are full, who justify themselves before men.

This, my dear girl, is his work, allotted and lined out; to this was his appointment confined, and to accomplish this was he anointed and sent; and in this work he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Hence his own declaration, "Behold," take notice of that, "my reward is with me, and my work before me." He cleanses

us from sin, quickens the dead, and justifies the ungodly; he enlightens the soul, works faith in the mind, and by the discoveries of his dying love he binds up the broken hearted, and sets at liberty those that are bruised, and is the comfort of them that mourn in Zion.

There is not one word in all the everlasting gospel against a sensible, lost and undone sinner, who feels his need of Jesus, and seeks him with all his heart, no, not one word. Christ himself invites the weary, the thirsty, the heavy-laden, and all that are willing, to come to him, and to take the water of life freely; and declares, that whosoever cometh he will in no wise cast out; and his gospel is not yea and nay, but yea and amen. Be of good cheer, he is the resurrection and the life, and whosoever believeth on him shall never die. Grace and peace be with thee.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XIII.

I HAVE just corrected my last sheet of the penny per day, and it will be out on Sunday next, if nothing prevent. I have still to be thankful that I do not labour in vain. Last Sunday came into the vestry one crying out under the anointing; my text was, "Because of the savour of thy good

ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee," Song i. 3.

Poor Mr. B. who I have long thought was almost buried in the world, has been long and sorely afflicted, and was sullen, dry, barren, and stubborn under the rod, and I began to stand in doubt of him; but God has lately mingled the meekness, contrition, humility, and compunction of his Spirit with his heavy afflictions, and it is wonderful to see the sweetness, dew, and warmth which these influences have produced in him. And indeed all trouble is hardening, all grief terminates in self-pity, all sorrow is and must be worldly, or desperate sorrow, and all trials only stir up enmity, rage, and rebellion, unless the Holy Spirit operates upon our confused chaos. One breath of life on the dry bones, one motion of the Spirit upon our darkness, one humbling influence upon our worst frames gives the blessed consecration, and turns all our troubles into a divine channel; making sorrow, godly sorrow; grief, pious grief; trouble, sanctified afflictions. Tribulation becomes a purging draught; the work of the furnace becomes in its effects more precious than gold; our stubbornness makes us relent, our rebellion debases us, and our heart-risings at God terminate in cringing to him in love, and in repentance towards him in dust and ashes.

He turns the stony heart into a springing well, and the shadow of death into the morning; and

I have often wondered where we should go, into what unfathomable depths of woe we should plunge when hurried on by jealous rage, enmity, hardness, rebellion, the devil's darts, and unbelief, if the heavenly Dove did not command a calm, rebuke our rage, and hover over the sin-disordered soul. I am more than sure that not one true idea or conception of God, not one thought worthy of him, no veneration for his name, no trust in him, nor gratitude to him, but what springs from the prolific operations of this our benevolent Monitor, Admonisher, and Intelligencer. These things I have long watched and observed with much attention, and I believe that my own observations on these things, have in the general agreed with the experience of others, who have been at all acquainted with the internal war of these jarring principles; the different claims, cries, and cravings, so contrary the one to the other, that the wisest and best of guides have been brought to halt, not knowing which Lo to follow, or which course to steer. But this I have always observed, that the worst party is always the most clamorous, the most sonorous, the most violent, and strives the hardest for mastery; the other is still, calm, composed, and quiet, having nothing to fear from banter, bustle, and noise.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIV.

At present I am but poorly with a cold, but I am more and more sensible of the preciousness of Christ, and of the infinite worth of a good hope, both of which increase daily in price as old age comes on, and the mark of the prize approaches nearer. I should be of all men most miserable were it not for a precious Saviour, precious faith in him, and many precious promises to encourage and support it. I feel an increasing debility, but it is sanctified, and my soul cleaves the closer to the darling of all lost sinners. Fix your eyes and your heart upon this holy one, this just one, for all besides will delude, disappoint, and ultimately deceive; but the enduring substance must remain, and will be all-sufficient, when this world and all that is in it, yea, heart and flesh all fail together. Christ is and will be the prize, when all besides is a blank.

Your's most affectionately,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XV.

Dear Sarah,

I was very sorry to hear of —— being in the furnace, but man is born to trouble by his

first birth, and by the second he is a brother born for adversity. These things are grievous, but they are great blessings when sanctified to us, I mean, when by the Spirit's operations on us we are meekened, softened, humbled, and made tender-hearted, and become submissive and more resigned to the will of God by them. As to myself, I generally find my spirit stubborn and rebellious when the rod comes on, but afterward it yields the fruits of peace, humility, quietude, and contrition, which are more precious in the sight of God than all the gaudy and fair shew in the flesh, which is set off and so much admired by the advocates of natural religion.

Sure I am that my gains have been great by the furnace, it is buying of Christ gold tried in the fire, which makes us rich in faith though it costs us much pain; and we are compelled to part with peace, ease, contentment, rest, &c. all which are as dear to us as a down bed, or a path paved with moss. However I bless God for them all, for these things have so broken my spirit, that the Devil himself will find hard work to petrify it again; and in all this do I see the wisdom of God, for I am not a little indulged now under the infirmities of old age, which did not use to be the case with me but quite the reverse. Farewell.

Grace and peace be with you.

W. H.

LETTER XVI.

THINE Epistle came safe when I was pondering over the dreary way, and the thorny paths that have appeared in my pilgrimage. One place I built at Worpolsdon in Surry, that they took from me; another at Woking, they robbed me of that also. I built another at Sunbury in Middlesex, and they turned me out of that; and this has been set on fire twice, and now burnt down: but none of these things move me, the offence of the cross is not ceased, the life of Christ and the cross are inseparable; no life, no cross.

The only place that will admit us is Grub Street. Last Thursday my friends agreed for that, and the report of this so spread in two days, that more than two thousand attended, and some hundreds that could not get in. This was the first time they heard me since the fire, and their wishful looks, their glee, and the sympathy of their countenances put me to the test—I longed for Joseph's weeping apartment, for I had hard work to refrain and conceal. But I swallowed, and I shunned every pathetic expression, and by breaking out into a fiery zeal I soared above it. I admire the lamb in the closet, but the lion best becomes the pulpit, and I am a better master, and more acquainted with this art than most.

I concluded when the fire happened, that God intended it to drive me into the country, either into the north, or into Suffolk and Ely, for it matters not to me where. God is my rest, refuge, and dwelling place, and if I feel him I am at home go where I may. The people had heard of this and made great lamentation, and having fasted a whole month they have tried the letter men, not as formerly with the dew on their branch, but with a thirsty soul, and have returned with the pitchers empty, finding no water. But my dwelling is still to be where satan's seat is, in the midst of them that would swallow me up whole as the grave, and alive as those that go into the pit. At present we are all in motion, some looking out for a spot of ground, some bringing their offerings, others wishing the glory of the latter house may exceed the glory of the former; but it is to bear the same name, this I gave them to understand from the pulpit, and assigned the following reasons for it: that unless God provided men to work, and money to pay them, and materials to work with, no chapel could be erected, and if he provided all these, Providence must be its name. And it goes by this name already, and that justly, for though we have no chapel but in imagination, yet providence still exists.

A very noble house at the top of Portland Place belonging to Lord Foley has a very large garden about it, and this large garden is to be sold, or let to build on; we are now after a piece of it:

the chapel will no doubt be an eye-sore to Portland Place. Who knows whereunto this may grow? and who can tell but the hand of God may be in this, and that it may fall out to the furtherance of the gospel? I shall set myself upon the watch-tower till the vision speaks, which in the end will be made so plain as to enable me both to read and to run, for there is no running in obedience till the mind be instructed in the way.

Adieu.

W. H.

LETTER XVII.

I HAVE been busy in bringing out a book, and my hand getting unsteady it is but now and then that I can write at all. But I find that sore conflicts are attended with some new discoveries of new things, which are intended to mix with the old; and in the pulpit I find an increase of energy, and this brings an increase of hearers, and among these there appears an increase of awakened souls. Deep troubles lead into the deep waters of the sanctuary, and in these the Spirit searches the deep things of God; in these depths we are made to see and feel the things that are freely given us of God. Almost every sabbath-day's discourses are fetched out

of the fire, or out of the water; and I observe that whatsoever comes not from hence, has but little heat or moisture in it.

This furnace work debases, mortifies, and humbles the instrument, and empties it of self; its weakness and feebleness is felt, and the mind is turned to the all-sufficient arm of the Lord, and from hence fresh power is infused into the new man, which makes grace sufficient. And as out of the mouth of babes he perfects praise, so out of human frailty he perfects power by making us feel that we are but bruised reeds, and yet in him brazen walls and iron pillars.

Nor does this divine power ever appear more perfect or more sufficient to perform and perfect the great work of forming sinners anew, than when the instrument renounces and disclaims all human sufficiency; even babes will sometimes say, the Lord is with him, what power! he is strong in the Lord! the Lord is with him of a truth. The treasure of grace and truth, by the Spirit, is lodged in the earthen vessel, that the excellency and the power may appear to be of God and not of us; hence it is needful that our frailty and emptiness should be sometimes seen when we are left of God, and his power as conspicuous when blessed with his presence.

W. H. S. S.

My love to S. Mr. B. E. and all the seed royal.

LETTER XVIII.

To W. J.

My Son,

When thou wast in town I was just ready to say to you as Joseph did to his fellow-prisoners, "Why look ye so sadly to-day?" I hope times are better with thee now, "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself will fall." If sorrow succeeds the rod it is sanctified to us, "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken, and by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." There is no rod laid upon us but what we make ourselves, we cut the birch and bind it up, God only uses it. "Hast thou not procured these things to thyself?" this is the question asked; and the answer is, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me," &c. Micah vii. 9. By these things we learn to walk upright, by these things we grow, by these things we learn, by these things we live, and in all these things is the life of our spirits, so God revives us and makes us to live. These are our swings, our leading-strings, and our go-carts, and all little enough to teach us to set one foot before another in faith, or to make

straight paths for our feet; and surely there never was any nurse, governess, father or mother so tender, kind, careful, pitiful, and affectionate as our dear and dearly beloved Lord Jesus Christ: "His wrath is but a moment, in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," Psal. xxx. 5.

Go to him again my son, he will wipe thine eyes, comfort thine heart, and bid thee go in peace; he knows our frame, and he knows thou art a stubborn one, who will want a good many yokes, clogs, and fetters by the way; he will bring them forth and put them on just as thy folly calls for them, and make all things, thy old man and all, work together for thy good. Tender my kind love to your mother, and to the person that sent the hare, and thank him for it. My respects to W. and all friends that love my Master Jesus.

While I remain, ever your's,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XIX.

I WAS not a little pleased to hear that some little encouragement attended the reading the penny a day, a little of that coin goes a great way, and enough to support life is promised at

the worst of times. If no roast lamb, if no fatted calf, if no oil from the olive, no honey from the rock; if no sincere milk of the word, nor new wine of the kingdom, yet this remains: "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure;" they shall have life in their souls, and refreshings in their sorrows, so that condemnation shall not enter into them, nor the fiery trial wither them. G—'s account does me good, God has taken two that dwelt in the wilderness, and slept in the woods; I am glad to hear of every appearing of Christ at Cranbrook; Christ most assuredly is visiting the weald of Kent.

About twenty-two years ago, a young woman, housemaid to the Earl of ——, came to hear me, and after some time was called, but never spake to me. Soon after the Lord's Master of the Horse married her, and they both went to the country house at P. in Sussex. About two years ago her husband, being wealthy, left his place and came to town, and she came and owned the relationship, and claimed her parentage, and was soon charmingly revived. A few months ago she drooped, and a fortnight ago died in a most glorious manner: now said she I see what I am sent to town for, to be received, and established, and ripened for heaven. I am to have the full account of it, as one of our members was there and abode with her. Just before she went off the woman asked,

'Should you not like to see the Doctor?' She answered, 'Yes, I should like to see him, but I can go now without my crutches.' I think you will see this account in print, if time permit.

Her husband, who has been not very kind to her, wanders about melancholy, saying, he never saw such a death in this world, nor does he believe that there is in all the world a more miserable man than himself. I have heard that he talks of going into the country; any where will mournful sinners run rather than mourn in Zion, where the promised blessing is. My love to Sarah and the children.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XX.

Friend Jane,

HAVING some thoughts that you are desirous of altering your state, which I know by sad experience to be a wretched one, permit me to give thee a little advice about the object of thy choice, and the match. The adorable object, the grand personage, who is the king of love and of all real lovers, is one that loveth at all times; but he differs from all other lovers in his ways of shewing it. He often draws and

allures at first, but it is often seen as soon as we begin to be alarmed that the rod comes on; "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten:" and often the courtship is carried on by frowns, crosses, suspicions, trials, cold indifferences, jealousies, and sad searchings of heart; "All the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins and hearts."

We came into this world wedded to the law, we are born in a self-righteous spirit, and our pride loves some ground of boasting, which the law doth not exclude; hence God sends it home to us to discover our sin, fill us with fear, terrify us with wrath, and condemn us to death. Here we labour hard, and mean well, but as we can give the law no love, the law can give us no life, hence a divorce is needful. This law has dominion over us as long as we live and no longer. When it has discovered our crimes, and cursed us to death; when despair of self invades us; when vain confidence fails; when false notions of a God all mercy are destroyed, and legal hope gives up the ghost——then we are loosed from that law, and are no adulteresses though we make a better choice, and get married to another man, "Even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 4.

This strange divorce is absolutely necessary, and of great use to us, because the sentence of

the law wounds the spirit, and a wounded spirit withers all carnal love, and crucifies us to all the lovers, or to all the things loved, which this world can afford. This paves the way for the Lord to have all the heart, He that loveth any one better than me is not worthy of me, Mat. x. 37. The law makes sad work with our linsey-woolsey garment; the fig-leaf dress becomes very much tattered, and torn; we pull it about us this way and that way, but all in vain. Our filthiness is in our skirts, our heels are still bare, there is a time to rend and a time to sew —— but neither the fig-leaf dress, nor the new cloth patched to our old garments, will make a robe for the Lamb's wife. Sin and fear, guilt, filth and shame appear to our confusion when we have done our best; both top and tail, fore bodies and hind bodies, the stuff and the body lining, all is bad, it is filthy rags.

The Lord's most Holy Spirit reveals the atonement, this makes us nigh; by the discoveries of his own love he knits the marriage knot, and always embraces his spouse. Enwrapped in his own robe O how does such an highly favored soul blush, when irresistible love compleats the conquest, and seals the endless union! Humility and meekness adorn the mind, sweet submission bedecks the will, peace becalms the conscience, love enflames the heart,

while the raptures of joy make the countenance comely, which is an ornament of grace to the head, and a terror to the hypocrite in Zion.

Press forward Jane, God says, "It is not good that man should be alone," Gen ii. 18; and it is the second Adam that is meant by that man. God calls him a bridegroom and a husband, and therefore he must marry. God calls him likewise an everlasting father, and therefore he must have a wife and family, and he can have neither but among us; because he is man, in our nature, a brother of ours, and a very near kinsman; if he turns his back upon us he is a head without a body, a king without subjects, a husband without a wife, and a father without a family.

In this match, Jane, expect both the world and the devil to forbid the banns, for both are averse to the match; but remember that a divine joint here is the endless tie of a threefold cord. The Father chose the daughter, and proposed the match; the Son accepts the spouse in the banns of endless wedlock; and the Holy Spirit witnesses the union, and possesses the bride till the consummation of the marriage in heaven. All other banns of union are a rope of sand, witness my hand. You must distinguish Esau's hand from Jacob's voice.

W. H. S.S.

LETTER XXI.

I RECEIVED Sarah's Epistle, and am heartily glad to find that she is still in the furnace. Our election can never be known without it; God has chosen us in the furnace of affliction; and it is in the fire that we are to call upon God, and to be answered by God, and likewise to be owned and acknowledged by him, as his own. Read Zech. xiii. 9; and therefore there can be no hope without the fire. Every work is to be tried, revealed, and made manifest by fire. Read the first epistle of Corinthians, the third chapter; and I know of no one ingredient in the furnace worse than spiritual and carnal jealousy. I believe I had near three years of this fuel or coals of juniper; and if you will read the whole account of Sarah and Hagar, Jacob, Rachel, Leah, &c., you will see little else than these furious fumes among them; and under these fits they carried their complaints to God, who never failed to hear their cries, and redress their supposed wrongs.

For my part, I doubt not but it will work for your soul's good, and I ground my hope upon nothing else but the troubles that you labour under; for who makes me glad, but those that I see made sorrowful? My lime-burning cured

me of one member of the old man, I mean inordinate affections; and while this reigned I had but half a heart for God, but when this idol was purged off I was fit for his service, and to be sent any where. No devil, Sarah, can ever prevail, no furnace, flame, fuel or fire can ever kindle; no flood, no deluge can ever overwhelm a soul that cries day and night to the darling, propitious, and eternal Son of God. Act like David, Sarah, give thyself unto prayer, attend continually upon this very thing; they that sow in tears shall reap in joy, and in due time you shall reap if you faint not. This in every time of trouble is my constant employ, and sure I am that nothing has been too hard for me in this work, throughout my whole pilgrimage. Many a snare, many a mountain, many a strong combination against me have I blown up, dispersed, and brought to confusion, by this poor little simple weapon called 'all prayer:' this, Sarah, is your arms and armour, and do you make full proof of its utility.

As the vessel conceives its burthen, do you pump it up upon your knees every time you go; you will lighten it of its cargo, and keep it above water, Read Psal. cix. 28: you will find first a wave of trouble and then a gale of glee, afflictions and comforts——the former creates an appetite, and the latter makes hope abound. The more bitter the herbs, the sweeter the lamb;

all Christ's garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and with these ingredients did Joseph and Nicodemus embalm the Lord's body; and all his body mystical must share the same bitter and sweet. John's little book, and Ezekiel's roll was first sweet as honey, and then bitter as aloes. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy;" "In the day of prosperity be joyful, in the day of adversity consider; God has set the one against the other." It is my best peace with God to this day, "Thou hast known my soul in adversity;" and all peace must be weak where there is no trials, nor sensible need of a Saviour.

Give my kind love to poor ——, and to both your brothers, you are all on my mind, and in my heart, and I wish you all a share in the Master's cup; and that you may have a little flogging as well as the poor Doctor is my wish. God bless thee, so prays,

Your's in Christ,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXII.

Thursday.

YOUR's came to hand last night, but I am very busy. Poor Baker is dead. About a month ago I went to see him, and he seemed sweetened

in soul, quite resigned. About a week after I called, and the old enemy was hard at him; his comforts were all fled, he mourned sadly, and wept like a child weaned, and begged that I would not forget him. From that time he came into my mind continually, I may say in every prayer of mine; and every now and then I sent him a written scrap of encouragement. Last Wednesday I called on him again; he seemed placid, tranquil, and very happy; sweetly softened, meekened, and comforted, weeping for joy, and abounding in hope. When I left him he rose up to shake hands with me, and reeled backward, not able to stand, and said, 'Ah, satan cannot get me down as he used to do.' Being much pleased I laughed, and said, 'A poor creature that cannot stand alone is bantering the devil, is not this a fulfilment of this scripture, "Let the weak say I am strong?"' Joel iii. 10.

I left him and went to chapel, saying as I went along, that poor James was then in his dying frame, and began to be perfumed with the Spirit's spikenard. On Sunday last, at half past four in the morning, he took his leave, uttering these words, 'Let the weak say I am strong,' and articulated no more. He had no pain, but was quite worn out, so that not a pulse could move. He is to be buried to-morrow, and on Sunday morning I intend to preach his funeral, and perhaps from his dying words.

He was one of the best of men, a dear son of mine, and had stuck close to me for upwards of thirty years, and he now reaps the benefit of it.

On Monday next I set off for Bristol. Many have strove with all their might for twenty years to keep me from those parts, and preachers have circulated reports that my books are prohibited being sold by government—this is to hinder the reading of them. But a great door and effectual is opened to me, and there are many adversaries. Men shut me out but God enlarges me; men make me stink, but God perfumes me. Love to Sarah.

Excuse haste.

S. S.

LETTER XXIII.

The Cabin. Monday morning.

With duty to Mother I acquaint her that her epistle came safe to hand: am always glad to hear from ——, and much more so to hear, and I am enabled to believe, that God has given you a good hope through grace. Even in the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and this finds a place of refuge; but hope affords support on the brink of ruin, and weighs the burdened and shattered vessel out of despon-

deney, despair, and all the imaginary and dismal resoundings of hell. All the floods of satan's rage and blasphemy, and all the filth, scum, and dregs of inbred corruption, can never send the little bark to the bottom with a gospel hope on board.

Be of good courage, Mother, wrestle, struggle, and fight hard; the prize is worth contending for. The least grain of faith puts on the breastplate of righteousness, and this is in a measure perceptible to the weakest believer, by the subsiding of terrors, by some sensible enlargement from bondage, by the sensible suspensions of divine anger, and by all our accusers being at times silenced, baffled, blasted, and put to the rout. There can be nothing of this in the quickened soul where there is no faith, no imputed righteousness. Nothing, no nothing baffles the devil like gospel hope, and an imputed righteousness; the former forbids despair, and the latter repels the curse. Every act of faith, every revival of hope, weakens the devil's shafts, they blunt the points of his darts; and as the atonement is discovered to faith, so the malicious flame of satan's rage is quenched. Satanic fire can only burn in guilt, and where there is none of this fuel to feed the fire, there it must go out.

Satan's curse has no effect upon God's blessing, his accusations cannot stand against the just;

who lives by faith, nor can his reproaches prevail against the satisfaction of our surety. "Thou shalt," says God, "forget the shame of thy youth," which springs from the remembrance of youthful lusts; "and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more," that is, the reproaches of satan when our souls are cursed and divorced from the law, and yet we cannot claim the better husband. This is our state of widowhood, and under which we are often saluted with a, 'Where is now thy God?' and, 'Where is now thy Jesus?' Away with, you, satan, thou hast nothing to do with this match, for thou hast neither part nor lot in the matter, this voice is to the sons of men. God says, we shall forget the shame of our youth, and that we shall remember the reproach of our widowhood no mpre; for our maker is our husband, Isai. liv. 4. Kind love to both.

S. S.

LETTER XXIV.

Dear Friend,

SARAH is still in the furnace, and in the furnace God hath chosen us. Christ is the refiner, the elect are the ore to be tried, sin is the

dross, faith the gold, and the soul's salvation is the end aimed at. God keeps his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem, so that it is always at hand and always hot; but none but the elect are favoured with this purifying flame, and all that escape this will be cast into another: there is a furnace of fire besides that in Zion.

But now for the different ingredients of which this flame is composed; love then, love of some sort or other is always one ingredient in this fire. The Jewish scribes were desperately enraged with jealousy at the apostles for preaching to the Gentiles; "I will provoke them to jealousy by them which are not a people." The scribes were lovers of themselves, proud, boasters; the enlightened Jews saw through them, the believing Gentiles hated them, and this filled them with jealous rage in behalf of beloved self, their high profession, and beloved profits. But this is not the case with God's elect, one ingredient in their fire is a sense, a deep-wounding sense of sin, which lays heavy on the mind; and bitter reflections from conscience upon every fresh remembrance of past sins, sets on fire the whole frame of nature.

A hopeless sense of God's revealed displeasure in a broken law which worketh wrath, is adding fire to fire, or as Milton says, 'Stirring up sin against law to fight.' The carnal mind shews its enmity at the impossible tasks of legal obedience,

and at the lawgiver for requiring impossibilities, and this enmity rages not a little. There is also a sense of the worth of our souls, a love to them, and a desire to save them, when the opposite to these are said to wrong their own souls; and all that hate Christ love death. And this real love to our own souls, which God hath kindled in us, is the cause of those grievous complaints —— My friends are estranged from me, and my kinsmen stand afar off: "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Under all this there is a secret love to Christ, which the Spirit kindles; but as he stands behind our wall, and only shews himself through the lattice, our love is pent up, and if there be no glimpse of him, nor visits from him to draw it out, we cannot in love go forth. Nevertheless this love shews itself by loving them that love Christ, by shunning them that despise him, and by grudging every indulgence another is favoured with; by envying them that seem to enjoy his smiles, and wishing for the least crumb that falls from his table.

In this fire every slight, or imagined indifference by a friend, stirs up jealousy; and as sure as Sarah is born, so sure is this true; "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." Inordinate affections are palmed upon the old man; filth is purged first, and idols afterwards: and while God is purging us from these, the devil labours the more to make our

love to the creature inordinate. I have been through all this, and this is the work old girl that is going on in you, and when he purges us he will be dear to us. My kind love and hearty prayers attend this.

Your's in haste,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXV.

WHATEVER you do, learn to bear afflictions Sarah, you may glory in your infirmities when you have nothing else to glory in. Besides, it is by these things the quickened soul lives, and herein the life of God in the soul discovers itself. Let nothing in this world, nothing beneath the sun prove an idol, a rival, or an image of jealousy to provoke God. He, and his dear Son, and his most Holy Spirit, have set their love upon us, and they are jealous of our affections; and he will have the affections, the glory, the praise, and the honour of his children, and these he will never give to another. These are all the revenues of his realm, the tributes of his empire, which lay chiefly in the faith and faithfulness of his people to him, their love to him and his cause, and their hope in him; their prayers to him for all they want, and their trust in him to fulfil promises to them, and

afford the promised help in times of need, which his word assures us of: thanksgivings also for all his favours, spiritual, temporal, and eternal.

And I know that there is not a word spoken in his name, not a right answer given to a gainsayer, not an unctuous word that speaks good of his name, not a penitential tear from the eye of faith, but what is received, esteemed, and regarded; the latter is put into his bottle, and the former noted in his book. Every self-abasing, self-degrading, and soul-humbling sensation, all lowly mindedness, all mean, contemptuous, and nothingness in our own eyes; all self-abhorrence, self-loathing, and self-denial are the evangelical fruits of gospel obedience, and are put forth under the softening influences and operations of the Holy Spirit of God. And I know that every spring of gratitude, godly sorrow, or evangelical repentance; every concern for God's honour, wishing well to his cause and his name, sympathy with the Saviour in his sufferings, and feeling concern for the welfare of his family; these, and all pious longings after him, and all gratitude for his favours, his love-tokens, and kind providences, are fruits of his Spirit, and such as no empty professor can attain unto, produce, or even counterfeit.

God bless you and yours, so prays,

Your most sincere, faithful, and affectionate Friend,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVI.

The Doctor to old Sarah with all due Respects.

I SEND to inform you that I find old age greatly weakens me, standing long now in the pulpit brings many strange wearisome pains on me, so that when I return on Tuesday eve, I am seldom right till Thursday morning. But the pleasing things which I have read and heard respecting the heavenly country, and a good hope of enjoying it through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus; and finding the infirmities of old age weaning me from this, and embittering it more and more to me, keeps me struggling for the prize of the high calling. For all the time that I remain here I must be kept poor, low, lean, and in beggary of soul: for if I get a little honey, wine, milk, butter, bread, or juice of the pomegranates, as soon as I get into the pulpit it begins to go off, and by the time I have done, the dew, the oil, the wine, &c. is all gone, and I return with a dry fleece, and an empty cruse; they are refreshed and watered with the well-spring of life, but I wax dead, dry, and barren. And thus death works in me, but life in them.

And here the private christian has the advan-

tage of the public labourer; all that he gets he keeps or eats, but all that I get is for the public; and if I labour for a whole week, and am never so successful in gathering fruits, and go filled with dew in my heart, and with fresh views in my head, yet one long and full discourse to a large, hungry, and thirsty flock will both empty, and drain the vessel quite dry.

I hope my old Mother gets on; we are sure to be right, Sarah, all the time we feel that in our flesh dwells no good thing; feeling this leads to self-abhorrence, and when self is abhorred Christ is sure to be all: "If any man come unto me, and hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple." No truer criterion than self-abasement; and Christ always rises and falls in our esteem, according as self is admired or debased, gratified or denied. The fight of faith may be discerned, and we may know whether war with satan and the world is going on, or at a stand, by prayer. When the devil, sin, and the world, have finally prevailed, there is an end to all prayer; and as sure as prayer goes on, so sure the devil loses ground.

Prayer, Sarah, is God's delight, and man's best weapon, it is both offensive and defensive, it is a preservative to ourselves, and a dagger to our enemies. This, in private, I esteem above all my privileges, the choicest of all the means of grace, and the ingatherer of all promised good,

And wonderful are the assistances God has provided for us, to keep us in this exercise. Christ, in the holy place, ever lives to make intercession for us, and the Spirit upon earth, he helps our infirmities, and makes intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.

God bless you both.

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XXVII.

THE principal concern of this old woman is about oil to put in the lamp. This secret oil that was used as a type under the law, was made of olive berries; hence Christ is now, in the New Testament, called the good olive tree; and God's elect are called olive trees also, Jerem. xi. 16; but being wholly corrupted by sin we are become wild, and are grafted, Paul says, contrary to nature, in the good olive tree, and partake of the goodness and fatness of this good tree, which is called the root that bears.

The oil is to be known by the following things. It is intended to anoint the eyes; for the want of this the Laodiceans thought themselves rich, and in need of nothing. This eye salve, or anointing, was to shew her, her true

state, which is wretched, poor, miserable, blind, and naked. The anointing is to discover this, our real state to us, so as that we may feel it. Under this teaching, fear that springs from danger, and sin which exposes us to wrath, make the yoke of bondage heavy. Now this yoke is to be destroyed because of the anointing, Isai. x. 27. At the destruction of this yoke, fear gives way to love, and grief gives place to joy. This change being made within, it causes a change without; the countenance which was either fallen, dejected, or sad, looks healthy and cheerful: this oil makes the face to shine, Psal. civ. 15. This secret oil is resembled by all material oil, which naturally rises above all liquids, and will be uppermost; nor will it incorporate with any fluid lighter, meaner, or inferior to itself. So that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for though the heart like the troubled sea casts up its mire and dirt, yet grace shall reign; no water can quench it, nor flood drown it.

This anointing is generally communicated after some sharp soul exercises, such as reproof and rebuke by the word preached: "Let the righteous smite me it shall be a kindness, let him reprove me it shall be an excellent oil." Sharp soul exercises prepare us for this unction, and the one is as sure as the other; for if we are

partakers of the sufferings, so shall we be also of the consolations: hence David, under the rod, looked out for this, and prophesied of it; "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil." Light, love, liberty and joy, are the pleasing and delicious sensations of this anointing. Love is the fire by which this oil is fed, and joy is the flame that breaks out and ascends from it; and this is the reason that it is called the oil of gladness, and the oil of joy. And young believers are very anxious after it, hence the wise man says, "There is a treasure to be desired, and oil in the dwelling of the wise," Prov. xxi. 20.

I am fully persuaded that Sarah has seen her sinful life and nature, and the sting of death which is the piercing dart of death, and the anger of God which attends it——these do not now pierce her, nor sink her. Hope counteracts despair, faith counteracts unbelief, and love counteracts servile fear, which springs from wrath; and when these graces are not going out in lively exercises, and are not engaged in bringing in joy and peace, yet they at such times abide at home to prop up the heart against the attacks of satan, and against the rebellion of our inbred corruptions. Hence it is at such times, and upon such trials, complaints like these, "Upon my peace came great bitterness,"

for so it should read; "Restore to me the joys of thy salvation." "The comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." "Why hidest thou thy face from me?" "I forget prosperity:" "Thou hast brought me into darkness, and not into light:" and, when I looked for good, trouble came. At such times we read of help, of strength, and of power, but not of joy, nor of peace. Grace by the Spirit puts forth all its strength, nor are we ever more strong, or more resolute than then, otherwise the rains descending, the floods coming, and winds blowing, and all beating upon the house, it would appear to shake the building ——— but at this time strength is all in all: "Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall," Isai. xxv. 4.

God bless old Sarah,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVIII.

I HAVE received Sarah's epistle, but I am up to the eyes and ears in business, having finished one book upon sowing to the Spirit, which is now in the copy: and I am now trying to explain the emblems of the Spirit, and his

different operations, set forth by those different emblems, in order to make one complete volume of the Contemplations. God will distinguish them that are his by many signs within and without. The Lord does not permit, any to succeed against his poor, worthless, unprofitable servant, though they try hard at it. His heart and his hand, his faithfulness and truth, his covenant and his promises, his dear Son, and his most Holy Spirit, are all engaged in our behalf; and so no weapon formed can prosper. This I narrowly watch, this I clearly see, at this I wonder, and by these things God endears himself to his poor despised ones.

When once hope springs up, and peace flows in, when humiliation and self-abhorrence takes place, the soul feels its hold, urges its claims, and expects his promised help, knowing, the government of all the subjects is to be upon his shoulders, and it soon learns to cast its cares and burthens there. And when once the soul finds its way, it labours hard to keep that path clear, the door open, the throne in view; and it feels often to see whether it is indulged with access, or obstructed; whether it may make free, ro stand aloof; whether confession, prayer, or thanksgivings go off best from the altar, and ease the heart most as they ascend: and when there is no vail on the mind, no confusion to baffle, no prevailing unbelief to shackle or entangle the

offering, we compass the altar with joy. The privilege is great at such times, and indeed the end of the gospel ministry is to bring souls to fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Christ Jesus. This is the end of it, and God's end is our rest, our satisfaction, and our comfort.

Best love to old Sarah, and her new man.

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XXIX.

OLD Sarah's short scrap came upon her sight of mine to———. The cruse seemed too scant to fill the pages; the springs may appear low, and the dews cease to descend, but the principle of divine life is still struggling within, and making diligent search. There is a feeling after him the last thing in laying down, and the first thing in waking up, and if he has but been there and gone again, the savour is left, and the transient visit is acknowledged. Peace he brings, and peace he leaves, and every legacy is highly prized.

"They that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit," Rom. viii. 5. The comforts of love, this is the first, and the highest of all,

but if this cannot be attained, then comfort from an assurance is sought after, and a removal of all doubts and fears about the goodness of our state. If this be denied then the testimony of conscience is sought, and the joy that arises from that. But if all is disquietude here, then the stability of hope is looked after, and a longing for, and looking out for the Lord's return, in hope of the revival of the work, and fresh light to see the path. And here our strength is to sit still, until he brings us forth to the light, that we may behold his righteousness.

The lost sheep, and the sheep that has lost its way, are to be sought out, looked up, and brought back by the good shepherd. "I have gone astray like a lost sheep," says David, "seek thy servant, for I do not forget," or have not forgotten, "thy commandments:" I am still bound to love thee, and thy flock, therefore seek thy servant. I am now getting all together for a long tour. "The harvest is great, but labourers are few," and I am old, and reaping is hard work for an old stiff back. Good bye, Sarah, be a good girl and mind your book.

THE DOCTOR.

LETTER XXX.

To the Unknown Friend.

SIR,

I RECEIVED yours. The temptation about the unpardonable sin is common to almost all persons that are brought to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, wrath, and ruin sin has exposed them to: I laboured long under the same. No sin of the body is this sin, no sort of uncleanness, theft, nor even murder is that sin; none more unclean than Mary Magdalen, and some of the Corinthians, Read 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Onesimus was a thief, and Moses and Paul were both murderers, but all these were saved. It is neither excess, idolatry, nor witchcraft, as may be seen in Manasseh, king of Israel.

The unpardonable sin is a sin of the mind; the person that commits it must be a professor, and confessor of the gospel. He must be a man who has been illuminated, or enlightened in his understanding to know; the natural affections stirred up, which is called tasting the good word of God. He must be one who has been an eye and ear witness to the power and force of God's grace and spirit, in its operations and effects upon others, so as to be convinced of the reality and force of it. Nor is it a jealous

envying of the happiness of others, when we ourselves seem to be neglected; the nine apostles were filled with indignation against James and John, for wishing to sit at the left hand and right of Christ in his kingdom. But it is a falling finally away from Christ, after all this profession; not falling into sin, but falling away finally, apostatizing, so as to return no more.

There must be a hating both God and Christ, as our Lord charges the Jews; "They have no cloak for their sin, for they have seen and hated both me and my Father." This apostate must labour to hinder the work upon others, knowingly, out of spite, which is called doing despite to the Spirit of grace. There must be a speaking against Christ openly, and this against conviction, truth, and conscience, which is called crucifying Christ afresh, and putting him to open shame.

The malice of this apostate must go further, in ascribing the ministry of the gospel, and the power of it in the hearts of God's saints, to satan, and that out of malice, knowing better; and speaking against all convictions knowingly, as the Jews, who saw our Lord's miracles, and envying him the honour, said, "This fellow casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." To which the Saviour replies, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven

unto men: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness;" because you say, I cast out devils by Beelzebub, &c. so that you see what this sin is. If this short epistle be of any use or encouragement to you, give God the praise; as for me I am a sinner.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXI.

I THINK that wonders have not ceased. A woman who is wife to a farmer between W. and D. was one day deeply wounded with this impulsive voice, 'Thou art a lost sinner.' The false anchor gave way, all refuges of lies failed, her sin found her out, and conscience did its office. Relaxation, a slow fever, and loss of appetite followed, until she got so bad as to be incapable of her business. After much doctoring, and long lingering, she was recommended to the sea air, and her husband took her a private lodging at Dover. When the husband left her, the woman of the house asked her of her affliction, the causes of it, and how long it had been on her, and she told her the whole of it, that the sole cause was, she was a lost sinner.

The woman brought her a book, and bid her read it. The author mentioned many providences that had appeared in his youth, troubles also and

prayers that God had seemed to regard, and she kept pace with him. He described his convictions also, and her heart tallied with that. She read on till she came to the author's deliverance, and then hope sprung up, and peace flowed in. Her spirits rose, her appetite returned, she eat and drank, and her countenance was no more sad, and she went home. The book was my Kingdom of Heaven, &c. — Some time back being ill, Dr. B. of W. was sent for to her, and observing her spiritual converse he asked her where she got it, and she told him all the above.

Another poorish woman at B. about two miles from B. in Kent, had been in soul trouble for years, and could get no relief. She one day sent her girl to buy a piece of bacon; she brought it home in a sheet of printed paper. The girl put the bacon out of the paper, and fell to reading it, and the name of God being mentioned in it, she bid the girl read it out, and God blessed it to the woman. She then sent for all the rest of those papers at the shop, and obtained them, and read them to her soul's comfort. A son of hers, who a few weeks after went to see her, being amazed at the change wrought in his mother, asked how she obtained it; she told him, and shewed him the papers. He replied; 'The papers are Mr. Huntington's Sermon on the Dimensions of God's Love; that is the man I

sit under.' A Mr. M. at C. who belongs to us, and who told us this, keeps the above young man as a servant.

A Mr. B. at C. being an arminian, he was a great talker about religion. He one day met ——— in the fields walking, and seeing her low and ill, he told her he was sorry to see it; she replied, I never shall be better till I hear Mr. Huntington; he answered, you have nothing to hinder you; she took it as a reproof, and came the Sunday following. Sometime back this man married an arminian wife, and if I mistake not she was a class leader. This woman hating the truth, and the power of it, used to borrow my Bank of Faith, and go among her acquaintances, and read it, jesting, spouting, and ridiculing it. After she had finished her last time of acting, one of her eyes went blind, and soon after she went ill to bed. The neighbours observing the house and windows shut up day after day, they entered into it, and found her and her husband both dead! men may deceive themselves, but God is not mocked. Whoever they were that tore my sermon of God's love to pieces and sold it for waste paper, were like those servants who had bread enough and to spare; and the poor woman, like the prodigal, was perishing with hunger, and eat what the others loathed. If you will copy off this account, Mr. B. might like to read it to the people,

and he would keep it by him: for why should the wonders God hath wrought, be lost in silence, and forgot? Respects to Sarah.

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER XXXII.

I HAVE lately been a good deal exercised in my mind with various things. Poor Jenkins is very ill, and has been exceeding low in his mind; and I have had unabated epistles from him to attend to. Satan and unbelief have met together in the Doctor, while the rage of the enemy in his access to me, and influence upon me, stirred up the carnal mind, and its enmity and rebellion, and these made uncomfortable work within. Since that conflict, the better visitor has approached, and faith has gone forth to meet him, and to welcome him in: this is the best of all meetings, and of all unions.

And of late I have watched, observed, and considered it, and so it really is; whenever the devil is let loose upon us, every corruption is animated and put in motion, they feel their master's feet, and by their motions shew their alliance, their attachment, and their loyalty; when the wicked rise, the new man is hidden, Prov. xxviii. 12. Faith and love meet, em-

brace, and adore the Saviour; unbelief and enmity meet, embrace, and adore the devil. These are the motions which produce all our changes, and we cannot say as our dear, precious, and ever adorable Master did, namely, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." We have enough to invite him, embrace him, and to entertain him too; we have the outward man, the body; and the old man, who is enmity. Besides, the new man which is love, not our love but God's love, not our love to God, but his love to us: this is the new man, and must be if charity believeth all things, hopeth all things, beareth all things, endureth all things, and rejoiceth in the truth, is not puffed up, and thinketh no evil. This is the new man, which the old man persecutes, which the world hates, and which is the genuine offspring of the King of kings, and a sweet one he is.

Ever your's,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXIII.

I HAVE finished the copy of the sermon you mention, and with it my thoughts on two texts more; one is, "The fields are white already to harvest;" and the other, "At our gates are all

manner of fruits, new and old:" but my hand being unsteady, I get on but slowly.

Last week I had a most singular account from a young man, a countryman, a native of B. in Kent; he was high in profession among a small company there. He got hold of one of my books, and this threw him to the ground, and his profession fell before the ark; he then waged war, or like a wolf, fell foul of the flock, and the shepherd too: a sharp battle ensued, but he would neither give way, nor give up. He came to London to live, and to hear me, and though he was always out of my sight, yet it seems I fell on him, and not like one that beats the air, for every stroke told, being upon that part already galled. At last he gave way, and fled into Buckinghamshire, and I kept the field. Here providence frowned, pocket failed, conscience flogged, and he came back again.

He no sooner appeared on the stage, but, according to his account, I fell on him again, and beat him on the old sore place; not only for former offences, but for running away also in the day of battle. Nevertheless he stood his ground, got work in town under an advocate of Winchester's, who lampooned me all the week long as bad as I did him on the Sundays. At last he gave ground again and fled, and I kept the field a second time. His father had a little money, his mother understood lace, and all

three set off to Northampton, and set up in that business; he and his mother travelled to buy the lace, and hell followed him. They traded until all was gone; the father raged, the mother grieved, and the son fainted and failed.

Back they came again, the father got into a superintendant's place in a coal wharf, the mother into lodgings, and the son came and appeared on the stage again; not that I should see him, for he took care of that. Nevertheless I hit him again, and we had several desperate rounds more; at last he fainted, and fell to the ground through loss of blood, and want of breath; nor would he get up, nor would he rebel any more, nor would he try to run away, nor would he strike a stroke more if I killed him. At this time his Second came in, and picked him up, standing at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemned his soul. Here I had two to withstand me, and a third, the Comforter was not far off; so upon this it seems I gave over, and we ended in cool blood, and not in the heat of anger.

When I looked upon his ruddy countenance, I was astonished, for he is but a stripling, and I a man of war from my youth. His weapons were carnal, and mine mighty through God; yet this insignificant rascal owned, with many tears, that he had withstood me for six years: however my weapons broke every bone in his

skin. And thus the physician has healed the bones that have been broken, yet should he ever dare to commence hostilities a second time, one stroke from my weapons would make them all come to pieces again; this I know by blessed experience. His words are weighty, savoury, and unctuous; and I find a double love to him, being my countryman in a double sense, and I believe a genuine offspring of the heavenly Jerusalem; a noble vine, wholly a right seed, and one that cannot degenerate into a strange slip. My respects to all.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXIV.

THINE epistle came to hand, but I have such a cold and cough that I cannot write. I wonder not at the young man's dream. Our poor dear King is very ill, the death of his darling has quite overset him. He is the anointed of the Lord, the breath of our nostrils, under whose shadow we dwell among the heathen. When he goes, I fear the power of the holy people will be scattered; no more tolerations for us. The papists will come into power, and regain the outer court—the dead protestants; and when they get the national church, the congregational must be exposed.

When I was last in the North, I dreamed I was at the head of a large party, which party was all behind me, disputing with a number of desperate men, with large crouds behind them; and suddenly a large rock sprung out of the ground, and I pointed to it, saying, 'That is for us, look at that,' and at which they seemed abashed. I awoke, and soon after fell asleep again, and dreamed again the same dream, until the rock rose up as before, to which I pointed a second time. My foes seemed again confounded, and I awoke with these words, sounding both in heart and ears; "Thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee."

In the spring last, I dreamed that myself and another were burnt at a stake. As soon as I came to the place a most beautiful woman, most gaily attired, with a handsome face, but vicious appearance, looked and grinned at me from behind a splendid curtain: when she had glutted her eyes she withdrew, and I saw her no more. I concluded she was the whore of Babylon, who will not grin long, and when she goes it will be for good and all. I saw the remains of myself and friend lay on the earth, black as a coal, and not bigger than two geese, which I thought was the departed soul's view of the body's last remains, and then I awoke.

All ranks and classes of worshippers are paving the pope's way, church folks, arminians, soci-

nians, and all sorts of dead dissenters. And these shall find it as the Jews did, who all thirsted for idol worship; but Nebuchadnezzar's image in Dura, when they must either fall down or go into the furnace, sickened them. And so these who are casting up the way for the man of sin, shall have their fill, for all shall worship him, whose names are not found written in the lamb's book of life: and wo to them that worship this beast, for they shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. Thus all sorts of professors shall hasten the slaughter of the witnesses, and this slaughter shall ripen them for ruin. But there is a heavy storm coming on I fear, and not a few are taken, and are still taking from the evil to come.

God bless you all.

S. S.

LETTER XXXV.

August 7, 1795. Church Street, Paddington.

It comes to inform you that I am to be at Lewes next Sunday se'nnight, the 16th instant, to preach there three times on that day, and on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings following, if God permit, when and where

I hope to see brother W. I have been very poorly for some time, and am but weak and feeble now, but, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits;" and for a good hope through grace among the many undeserved and unexpected favours bestowed on the least of all his creaaures, and the chief of all sinners. He leaves me not without a witness, nor without an evidence, nor without a token for good, nor without a providence, nor without light, nor without life, all of which are new covenant blessings, and bear a lasting date.

Faithful are the covenant-makers, and the compact is well executed, ratified, and confirmed, by the covenant head: the blessings all free, all safe, and all sure; all yea, and all amen, from end to end. The bond of it is God's eternal love; the legacies, grace and glory; the heirs of it, predestinated to the adoption of sons; the donator, God the Father; the testator, who confirmed it by death, Jesus Christ; the executor and distributor of the legacies, the Holy Ghost; the promise sure to all the seed. The way into the bond of this covenant, is under the rod; the gate of entrance, is Christ; the act of entering, is believing; the blessings then enjoyed are joy and peace.

This is the covenant of grace, because it exhibits and reveals the everlasting love of God, and all the blessed fruits and effects of it. A

covenant of life, because life is the great and grand blessing of it, and because life and immortality are brought to light by it. It is the covenant of peace, because peace, reconciliation, and friendship through Christ, are revealed in it, and held forth by it. It is the better covenant, holding forth the greatest and best things. The covenant of promise, because all the blessings of it are freely given. The brotherly covenant, that brings us as sons to the elder brother, and makes us joint heirs with him. The covenant of royalty that makes us kings; the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, that makes us priests unto God; and the covenant of wedlock, by which we are betrothed for ever in righteousness, faithfulness, tender mercy, and loving-kindness, joined to the Lord, and one spirit with him. But I must stop, or else my cruse will run till there will not be a vessel more, or at least nothing to fill it. God bless you all. Amen, and amen.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XXXVI.

To Mrs. H.

WELL Mary, how do you do? Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the children? "Say ye to the righ-

teous it shall be well with him." Oh! the spotless robe, the brilliant garment, the bridal attire, the soul-adorning vesture, which the heavenly bridegroom hath wrought out for those that trust in him before the sons of men He came forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiced as a giant to run a race. He saw the darling of his soul in the ruins of the fall, a prey in the den of dragons, exposed to the vengeance of heaven, bound hand and foot in the chains of guilt, and led captive by the worst of foes. He saw the airy heavens swarming with devils, and the dark places of the earth filled with violence, and with the habitations of cruelty. He considered the infernal legions he had to encounter, and the malicious tribes he had to oppose. He saw the infinite breach that was open between God and man; but in this gap he saw no man, and he wondered there was no intercessor; but his own arm must bring salvation, and his own righteousness must sustain him.

Pity to his spouse moved him, and indignation at his foes roused him; the day of vengeance rose up in his heart, and the year of his redeemed appeared in view, Isai. lxiii. 4. "He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke," Isai. lix. 17. His perpetual and spotless obedience added strength to

his invincible breastplate, and every victory added lustre to his helmet. The crooked serpent felt the dint of his sword, and the lighting down of his arm distributed the indignation of his anger; the vengeance of his garments filled his enemies with terror, while his zeal swallowed him up: he wounded the infernal head over divers countries. The objects of his choice bowed to his sceptre when they felt the arrows of his quiver, and received truth, meekness and righteousness, while the right hand of his godhead shewed the manhood terrible things. His conflicts were not attended with a confused noise, nor in garments rolled in blood, but with burning and fuel of fire. The corrupt trees became the fuel of his wrath, but his purifying furnace was in Zion; by fire and by sword did he plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord was many: and by the sword of his mouth, and the breath of his lips, was that slaughter made.

He went forth for the salvation of his people, yea, God the Father went forth for salvation with his anointed, and he divided him a portion with the great, and a spoil with the strong man armed. And though often sunk with sorrows and acquainted with grief, yet he shall drink of the brook in the way, and therefore shall he lift up his head, and pursue his victories; for every time that he drank of that brook, the power of the Lord was present to heal, and of course

some conquests were made, and the subjects of his kingdom were increased. Nor did he ever quit the field of action till satan, sin, and death were subdued, and many of his subjects were led to feel their enemies overthrow, and to triumph in the victory. He led captivity captive, and he received gifts for all rebels that came over to his standard, and ever since, the Lord God has dwelt among men.

But bless him, he shall appear the second time, and dethrone all the principalities of satan, the prince of the power of the air; the fear, the pit, and the snare. The wrath of the law that excites fear, and the bottomless pit, and those to whom the Lord Jesus hath been a snare and a trap, will all be revealed and brought to light, for the windows of heaven shall open, and the foundations of the earth shall shake. The earth shall break, dissolve, and move exceedingly; the earth shall reel to and fro, and be moved like a cottage, under her load of transgressions, and it shall fall and never rise again—then shall all the infernal potentates be punished, and wicked princes of the earth with them. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high;" this punishment is a vial of wrath on the air, on the prince of the power of the air, Rev. xvi. 17: the last vial destroys the devils, and binds them a thousand years.

"And he shall punish the kings of the earth upon the earth;" this is, putting down all rule, all authority, and all power. "And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered into the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison," and remain there a thousand years; "and after many days shall they be visited;" after a thousand years, "they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath," Job xxi. 30. Then shall the bright luminaries of heaven vail their rays, when "The righteous shall shine forth as the sun, in the glory of their Father's kingdom." Then shall appear Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; David, Solomon, and all the forefathers of Christ after the flesh, who in a literal sense are older than he. "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed;" but Oh, what follows! "When the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Read Isai. xxiv. 17—23; and compare with Revelations, the sixteenth chapter.

Mary, I have taken an unusual flight, that few, very few in our days, can pursue. "The way is above to the wise, that we may depart from hell beneath." Tender my kind and best respects to my dear Brother, to brother T. his wife, and to all that favour the righteous cause of the Son of God, is the constant prayer of,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO Mr. B.

I YESTERDAY received my dear friend's letter, and am sorry to find him so low; but whether we ascend the mount or descend the valley, or our feet stand on the even place, God works his own will in all these. On the mount we may speak wisdom in a mystery, in the valley become weak to the weak, on an even place confirm the churches; if in chains speak to them under the law. We must not judge of our success by our frames; comfort doth not perform the whole work on mount Zion, but crowns it. Sons of thunder, and sons of oil, are both in God's hands, nor are all prospects confined to the hills. You read of the valley of vision, where deep things are discovered out of darkness, and the shadow of death brought to light, by being turned into the morning; and it is here that the morning star appears, the first harbinger of glory. Some rays of the sun succeed, and on the beams hereof we ascend the mountains of rocks, to see the King in his beauty; but when these beams of his chambers are withdrawn, the old vail closes again, to inform us that he who dwelleth in the light no mortal can approach, no eye hath seen, nor can see.

He who only hath immortality, is separate from sinners, the prince of this world hath nothing in him; yet all believing sinners are one with him, and one in him, though the prince of this world hath so much in us, for, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Oh, the gloomy and dismal vail that hangs so heavy over us! this makes darkness the Lord's pavilion, nevertheless his goodness passes before us. In this we see his back parts, "But my face shall not be seen;" so it was under the law, but not so bad under the gospel. He there shone on Moses' face, this glory was skin deep, the skin of Moses' face did shine; but all these were shadows, and not so much as the image of the things. But Christ is the brightness of his glory, and the engraved image of his person! And the gospel is a glass which reflects a more exact likeness than all the images of the Sculptor, or the portraits of the Limner, or all the types of the ceremonial law, and for this reason —— the open and saving visions of faith, under the gospel, are no less than a divine exhibition of the most sacred Trinity, which under the law was known by word, but very, very dimly with respect to vision.

Observe the apostle, Moses put on a vail, but we not so, but with open face. God shone upon Moses' face, but he shines into our heart, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory

of God, in the face of Jesus Christ; and while we look, as through a glass darkly, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord: there is the light, knowledge, and glory of the Father; the face of Jesus; and the transforming operations of the Spirit. I often look back at this, weep, moan, and struggle to break forth, but all in vain; for we are surrounded with corruption, and blinded by the devil. These are the grave-clothes that keep us down, and the napkin that keeps us blind: and if we, who are to feed others, are indulged, permitted to soar and ascend the mount, the lads and asses abide at the foot of the hill, while we ascend to worship.

Christ came down from the mount of transfiguration when he preached to the people, and cast out devils. Moses must descend to speak to Israel, who were almost dead at the light of his countenance, till he wrapped his face in a mantle. What we crave, the wicked shun; we wish his presence to go with us, when the wicked perish at the presence of God. In short, all things combine to keep us down, the weakness and darkness of the people, their want of spiritual senses to discern, their dull ears and gross hearts keep us lying among the pots; for, get the wings of the dove, and you are out of sight, the preacher is hid in a corner; and if at any time we do see eye to eye, it is when we are

all wrapped in the cloud together. My poor dear Jenkins is gone, but God has given me one more, who seems to be after my own heart. God prosper him, bless him, and be with him, this is the prayer and desire of,

Thine affectionate Brother, Friend and Servant,

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER XXXVIII.

We got safe home on Thursday, about two o'clock, and what I have often observed came to pass. On my journey to Lewes, and from thence to the Wells, I know not when I have been more indulged with the sensible presence of God; such sweet, soft, humbling, and meekening sensations, as are not in the general upon old professors, in such abounding degrees. I saw more beauty in a tree, a field, or in an animal, than in all the artificial works of men's hands, in all the houses I passed: Solomon in all his glory never matched the lily.

But the Comforter shews us things to come, for God spoke once, yea twice, and I perceived it, that this was a supporting cordial against future trouble; a day of adversity would follow this prosperity: I attended to it, and expected it. On the Sunday I preached —— but on the

Tuesday such a violent cold and fever, and such rheumatic pains in my hip, that I could not well stand, much less go. On Wednesday so hoarse that I could not preach, but was obliged to take to my bed. I preached yesterday, but had hard work to make them hear me; however, I had a glorious time in the evening from Matt. xxi. 44; but am still poorly with cold, fever, and a pain in the chest, and the weather is very unfavourable for invalids.

I was thankful to hear, that the Lord owned his word by so unworthy, and so despicable an ambassador; but the work is all his own, and his church is his workmanship, and it is well for us that it is so. The papists are mustering all their force, and it is not doubted but they will gain unlimited power. Love to all friends.

W. H.

LETTER XXXIX.

The Cabin. Monday morning.

YOUR'S, with all its heavy tidings, came to hand. Many, and grievous complaints of the same kind, have been brought to my ears in the course of my ministry, and some in a more emaciated state than ever you was: a blacker catalogue than some at Corinth is not to be

found. However, we do not want to lessen our sins, by setting them against either Paul, Manasseh, or Magdalen; our sins are many, and God knows they are exceeding great, but the fountain that he has opened, cleanses from all sin. Idolatry, and fellowship with a familiar spirit, called spiritual wickedness in high places, is the worst of all; and those you read of in the Acts, who burnt their books of curious arts, seem to be of this stamp.

I have now been accustomed to walk the hospitals for thirty years, and am not so much terrified at every report of a perilous, a desperate, or an incurable disease, as I used to be. I have one that sits under me now, a female, who was alarmed, and sunk into despair, and went raving mad, and was chained down in a madhouse, and has hard warts of flesh on her wrists to this day, wrung with the chains. But she came out again, and came again under me, and where she got her wound, there she got her health, and belongs to us this day. I know another, a young man, who ran from place to place to hear the word, but I believe went where the truth in the power of it was not known; and labouring in his own strength, and gaining no ground, he despaired and hung himself, but was cut down in time, and saved. And soon he resolved, and to work against sin and satan, flesh and blood, he went again; but finding sin still reigned in him, and despairing of

success, he cut his throat from ear to ear: however, to the astonishment of every one that knew him, he survived that.

And afterwards finding his terrors besetting him afresh, he began again, but in his own strength, and sin still reigned in his heart, and broke out in spite of all he could do; and then he threw himself out of a hay-loft window, head foremost, upon a stone pavement, and fractured his skull. He lay senseless and speechless many days: and after all this, he came under that despised wretch, called the Coalheaver, and there the Lord delivered him. He came and offered himself to join us, and shewed us his throat, and his head, and his hands, for he was born a leper, and used to wear woollen yarn gloves, and took the sacrament in them. Soon after he fell sick, and I myself visited him, and carried him now and then a few shillings, to keep him from starving; and he continued in sweet submission, and blessed God for the Coalheaver to the last.

It is the law, and nothing else, that has entered thy heart; its work is to discover sin, and make it exceeding sinful; it makes the offence abound, and being spiritual it reaches the soul. It genders to bondage, fills the soul with servile fear, ministers death and condemnation, and works the wrath of God in the sinner. Our sin takes occasion by this, and rouses up all its foulness and filth against the holiness of God in the law; and

our enmity against God exerts itself against the wrath of God revealed in the law, which law worketh wrath in us. Self-pity, and unutterable enmity against the Most High, was what the law always worked in me; and from this inward work proceeded all my fruitless schemes of trying to get into non-existence, or else above the Almighty, and out of his reach; pushing at every vain devised corner, just as the prophet decribes it, like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury and rebuke of the Lord. And all convictions wrought by the law, were in my soul dry, barren, desperate, black, and attended with the pains of hell: no contrition, abasement, transient ray, real desire, hope or expectation, but only now and then, and they momentary, and always came from another quarter, but never from the law. Nevertheless, "Blessed is that man whom thou chastenest, and teachest him out of thy law;" for none else need a Saviour.

G. tells me his heart is not honest; in one sense it may not, in another sense it is honest. By the heart is often meant the conscience, according to John: "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." If we consider conscience as a magistrate armed, enlightened, stirred up, authorised and commissioned, empowered and emboldened to do justice, to magnify his office; to pursue us,

apprehend us, take us up, hold us fast, and condemn us, and all our best performances; certain I am that conscience is of God's side, works with the law, and in his office acts an honest part; much better than Paul's, when it persuaded him he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus; and better than theirs Christ speaks of, Whosoever killeth you will think they do God service—thoughts and conscience were far from honesty in both them.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XL.

My dearly beloved Companion in travail,

Be thou now a follower of me, as I am going before. "Cast up, cast up the highway:" Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; "No man cometh to the Father but by me," John xiv. 6. To cast up this way is to set Christ as crucified before sinners, and to make the whole bible to testify of him. "Gather out the stones:" this is to shew that no hardened apostates nor impostors, ever got into this way, so that we need not stumble at their apostacy. "Take up the stumbling-blocks;" that is to make those passages plain, which weak believers stagger at.

"Every valley shall be exalted:" the worst

valley is, the dark valley of the shadow of death, here nothing but destruction is felt and feared; but when the sun of righteousness arises and shines, the shadow of death is turned into the morning: "Thou turnest man to destruction," that is the shadow of death; "and then sayest, Return ye children of men;" that is the morning. "Every mountain and hill shall be brought low:" The highest mountain is election, called a mountain of brass; when love comes, this mountain is brought down to us, and we know our election of God. Christ is the mountain of the Lord's house, the rock that is higher than we; but when faith comes, then, "Thou hast set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings:" "I believed, therefore have I spoken," Psal. cxvi. 10.

And now having passed from death to life by faith, and faith having fixed itself above, in Christ Jesus, the ways that we travel take their names from the grace of God found in our hearts; hence it is said that, "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath." Faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, which justifies us freely from all things, gives our path another name: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. And, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1;

this gives another name to our path: "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Faith (that always works by love,) and love is the fulfilling of the law, this puts another title on our way: "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart;" "Charity is the more excellent way." Being partakers of the Holy Spirit of God, and having put on the new man of grace, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, our path is styled the way of holiness: "The unclean shall not pass over it, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the wayfaring men though fools, shall not err therein," Isai xxxv. 8, 9, 10.

W. H.

LETTER XLI.

TO MR. T.

Dear Friend,

I HAD no sooner sent off my last to you, then I received one from you, I think it was about two hours after. I have been for these three months hard at work, writing a book, which has swelled to a much larger bulk than I expected; however, I hope shortly to finish it. I was very glad to hear from you, and shall be

glad to see you at any time, and you are always welcome to any conversation with me. I bless my God my health is purely, considering my age and hard labour: however, a good God encourages me much in it, by sending vast numbers to hear the word, and by owning and blessing it not to a few, which is a sore grief to my adversaries; but God will work, and none shall hinder it.

Those that know the plague of the human heart, and the wiles of satan, will ever thank God for sending me; and the Lord says, "The whole need not the physician, but those that are sick." Those that are at ease will never approve of me, nor will God approve of them, for he sent his Son to seek and save them that are lost, and to call sinners to repentence. Never were my chapels fuller than now, which is taken notice of by almost all observers. Farewell; the Doctor sends his kind respects; and both the little ones, who are very well, join me in love and respects.

W. H. S. S.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells-street, Oxford-street, London.

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THE

LAW ESTABLISHED

BY THE

FAITH OF CHRIST,

A SERMON PREACHED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL

ON JANUARY 1, 1786.

By WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD STREET, AND AT THE CITY CHAPEL.

FOR MOSES OF OLD TIME HATH IN EVERY CITY THEM THAT PREACH HIM. ACTS XV. 21.

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1808.

To the Congregations at Providence Chapel, Monkwell Street, and Richmond in Surry.

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ,

GRACE and peace be multiplied. I here send you what you desired, after a long and impatient waiting for it. A multiplicity of engagements made the wheels drag so heavily, or else I should have been with you before now; besides, part of the subject being a matter of much debate, it took me the more time in laying all to the rule; that, as there was nothing crooked or perverse intended, so nothing crooked and perverse may appear. Putting the discourse since delivered from Rom. viii. 3, 4, as a supplement to this, would look too much like a garment of linen and woollen together; yet, to oblige you, I have scattered here and there a little, some in the warp and some in the woof, that it might come out all of apiece. May the Lord give you eyes to see for yourselves; and, as it contains what I believe to be real gospel, and what some call dangerous errors, I hope you will try it by the same rule that I did; and, if it

lies straight with that, may the promised blessings attend it, and the readers of it. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Amen, says thy willing servant to command,

W. H.

A SERMON.

ROMANS iii. 31.

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

THE Apostle, having been slanderously reported for preaching up free grace, and unconditional salvation through faith in Christ, endeavours to vindicate his evangelical doctrine against their false charge, and to stop the mouths of his legal accusers. He insisted upon it that the truth of God had abounded to the glory of God by his ministry, whether he was a true preacher or a false one; and, as the truth of God had abounded to God's glory by him, he ought not to have been judged as a sinner.

His accusers called him a liar, and his doctrine of free grace a lie; and others had avouched that he was such an enemy to good works, that he even preached up wickedness; and these were the words that they affirmed he dropped, "Let us do evil that good may come." Paul, on the other hand,

insisted on it that, if he was a liar, and his doctrine of free grace a lie, he had lied to the glory of God; and that the truth of God had abounded by his lie. Indeed it is not very likely that the truth of God should be abundantly manifested, and its power displayed, in the destruction of false doctrine, and subjecting sinners to gospel obedience, so as for God to get a tribute of glory from the recipients of his doctrine, while Paul, the minister of it, preached nothing but lies. As though Paul would say, 'Let my doctrine be lies or truth, God owns and blesses it, sets his seal to it, and gets glory by it; and, as God is glorified, and truth to sinners abundantly manifested, you ought to be silent, and do nothing rashly; for certainly God can get no glory by your slander, noise, and tumult.' Paul, finding that these advocates for the law carried on all their storm of raillery, lying, and rage, in the behalf of good works, brings forth the sentence of the law, and its execution against them, and declares it just. "For, if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? and not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil that good may come? whose damnation is just."

If this be the case, says Paul, then we are all on a level: for we have before proved that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; and, if we are all in one state, why am I called, instructed,

sanctified, and sent to preach? I am sent to preach, it is plain, because the truth of God hath abounded to his glory by my doctrine; and, if I and my fellow-labourers preach up evil works that good may come of them, what are we better than they? If there is no difference made by grace between us, why doth God get glory by us, and we get reproach by you?

The apostle refers to the Psalms, and brings the declaration from heaven, to confirm his own doctrine, and to stop their mouths; and then applies it to them as the voice of the law, which they contended for. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Paul still sticks to his text, and declares that the knowledge of sin is by the law; but that justification comes from another quarter, namely, the righteousness of God, which without the law is manifested. And this is no new doctrine; for it is witnessed both by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness which God the Saviour wrought out, and which God the Father accepted, and imputes to the believer in Jesus Christ. This method of justifying a sinner by the righteousness of Christ is to the glory of free grace, and without any injury done to either law or justice; because it comes through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to magnify the law, satisfy justice, appease

the wrath of God, and make reconciliation between God and sinners. And, as the law is made honourable by Christ's life, justice satisfied by his death, and the curse of the law fully executed on him as the sinner's surety, God appears still just to his law, and faithful to his threatening as well as to his promise; free grace is exalted, and the sinner brought in debtor to that, and saved freely by it. So God appears strictly just, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Now, if all have sinned, and by the law is the knowledge of it, and all by that law are brought in guilty before God (for all have sinned, and so come short of the glory of God); and if the sinner is justified by free grace, through the redemption and mediation of another; "where is boasting then? it is excluded: by what law, of works? nay," for the workmonger is always the proudest man, 1 Tim. vi. 4; the most judicially blind, John ix. 40; the greatest boaster, Ps. xciv. 4; the most like the devil, 1 Tim. iii. 6; and the furthest from the kingdom of God, Matt. xxi. 31. Nay, boasting is excluded by the spiritual law of wonder-working faith, that works a sinner out of himself into God his Saviour, and leads him to make his boast of him all the day long. Whatever maketh a man rich, healthy, happy, glorious, and affords him long life, he is sure to boast of. Grace makes him spiritually rich, Rev. ii. 9; healthy, Ps. lxvii. 2; happy, Prov. iii. 13; glorious, Isa. lx. 1; and affords him everlasting life, without any regard to

his deeds as a procuring or meritorious cause thereof. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." But perhaps you set yourselves up on the account of your being Jews, and having been circumcised. This is but a refuge of lies. "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." Your circumcision will not justify you before God without faith, nor shall the uncircumcision of the Gentiles condemn them if they believe in Jesus; "seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith."

Now I suppose you will run off, and declare that we give a loose rein to all sin, corrupt the morals of the people, make void the whole law of God, and destroy all good works, by preaching free grace and free justification by faith in Christ Jesus.

But stop, do not conclude too hastily; we do not injure nor make void the law through faith; God forbid; it is established this way, and no other. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

Having introduced my text, I wish you to be attentive while I offer my thoughts under the following heads:

1. What the law is, and the lawful use of it.
2. What it can, and what it cannot do.
3. What we may understand by faith.

4. Prove that faith establishes the law, and how.

5. Shew who those are that make void the law.

6. Make a modest inquiry whether the law of itself, exclusive of the promise, be a sufficient and scriptural rule for the real Christian's life, walk, and conversation.

And, lastly, whether setting the law perpetually before all ranks of Christians as a rule of life can with propriety be called speaking the language, or doing the work, of an evangelist.

First, what are we to understand by the law of God? I understand the decalogue, or ten commandments, which the Lord gave in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, and which are repeated again by Moses in the fifth of Deuteronomy. "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more." This decalogue is the main root from which all other trunks and branches were drawn by Moses and the prophets. These words were written on two tables of stone, and put into the ark, as God's everlasting testimony against all sin and sinners. Hence the ark is called the ark of the testimony; and to this testimony the tribes went up.

Secondly, the law shadows forth many of the perfections of God; and it is a revelation of a great part of his mind and will, shewing what he willeth, and what he willeth not.

Though it cannot, in the strictest sense, be called a revelation of all the mind and will of God; for the mystery of his will, to be made known touching the way of life in Christ, is brought to light through the gospel; yet a revelation of God the law certainly is, as many of his glorious perfections shine therein; hence the ministration of death is said to be glorious.

The holiness of God appears in the law; "the law is holy;" and that perfection, shining as a comet in the law, discovers our filthiness; and hence our enmity rises against both the law and the lawgiver: "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

The goodness of God appears in it; for the law is good, because it commends nothing but what we know to be really good, and forbids nothing but what we know to be evil; therefore it works death in us by that which is good, insomuch that our evil consciences will commend it. "If our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" The justice of God appears in the law; the commandment is just, Rom. vii. 12. We see his displeasure revealed against all sin, and his everlasting wrath against all sinners; and not a single ground of hope is to be found in the law of commandments, that he will ever hold any guiltless who transgress the same: nor is there the least

ground of hope, in all the book of God, that any one part thereof will ever be altered or repealed; consequently there is no mercy for them that die under its curse. Go, ye cursed, into everlasting punishment.

The immutability of God appears in the law; God is of one mind, and none can turn him, Job xxiii. 13. This appears if we consider the law as a revelation of wrath. "The wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," Rom. i. 18. And this wrath is said to be the cup of unmixed wine, poured out into the cup of his indignation, which will be the portion of the wicked for ever, Mal. i. 4.

When Justice put that cup into the hands of our blessed Surety, the human nature shuddered at it, and the Saviour, with a threefold petition, cried, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But the removal of it could not be complied with. God spared not his own Son. And, if he spared not his own Son, will he spare the sinner that dies under the law? Here Justice appeared in all her inflexibility, the lawgiver and the law in their immutability, and the weight of wrath in all its dreadful appearance; sin in its just demerit, the malice of sinners in all its insensibility and cruelty, and the dear Redeemer in the highest act of unparalleled obedience.

The eternity of God appears in the law; the transgressors of it shall go away into everlasting punishment, Matt. xxv. 46.

I know that some of our troublers of Israel, who pretend to be famous Hebraists and Grecians, in order to support the new doctrine of a gaol-delivery for the damned in hell, tell us that eternal and everlasting in the original languages have a limited sense; but I have found none so daring as to affirm that it admits of a limited sense when applied to the eternity of Jehovah, or to the eternal happiness of the saints. Let this be granted, and the eternity of God will appear in the law. It is proved that the law is expressive of many of the glorious perfections of God, which shine conspicuously in it. Hence it is said to be glorious. And let such gentlemen hope for a gaol-delivery for the damned, and try when they come there if the abuse of goodness, the contempt of glory, the displeasure of a slighted God, scorned justice, immutability derided by a false hope in a mutable law and lawgiver, do not to all eternity flash in the faces, and recoil on the consciences, of all who die under the curse of that dreadful law. In that sense God, as an injured and offended Being, will ever visit unpardonable transgressors with the dreadful stripes of his iron rod. "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." And the damned shall surely come out when the immutable Jehovah admits of a change, but not till then.

If God can fail in his law he must fail in himself; and, if one perfection can be changed, so may all. But "let God be true," says the Holy

Ghost, and then we shall be able to agree with the same Spirit with respect to the law. "Thy law is the truth." Having given a brief description of the law, I now pass on to treat of the second branch of this head, namely, of the lawful use of it.

"The law is good if a man use it lawfully." It is lawful to sound God's dreadful alarm from it, in order to batter down the daubed wall of self-righteousness, and the false peace that attends it. This was prefigured by throwing down the wall of Jericho by the sound of rams' horns.

The spirituality of the law is to be insisted on; the law is of the same divine nature as the lawgiver. The law is spiritual, but the sinner is carnal, sold under sin. When the law is enforced in its spiritual meaning, and its spiritual demands discovered, the conscience of the sinner is laid open, his sin exposed, and he appears under an awful arrest. When the commandment came sin revived, and all manner of concupiscence appeared. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

The goodness of the law, its immutability, eternity, and unlimited demands, ought to be insisted on, in order to execute all legal hopes in a killing covenant; and to drive the sinner out of all his false holds and refuges of lies, by proving that as many as are of the works of it are under

the curse of it, Gal. iii. 10; and, dying under it, they must rise under it, and be condemned by it; for heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the law shall fail, Matt. v. 18. The law will deliver up to the judge every transgressor that is found under it, and bring him to an account for every idle word; and the judge is bound, by the immutable ties of truth and righteousness, to deliver the criminal up to vindictive justice; and eternal justice will see the eternal sentence of the law eternally executed. The law, therefore, is lawfully used when it is faithfully preached in its spiritual meaning to them that are under it; that the mouth of boasting may be stopped, and the sinner brought in guilty before God; for the language of the law is directed to all self-righteous souls that seek to be justified by it; for "we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." A gospel minister may gospelize any part of the law, and set it, disarmed of its ourse and condemning power, in a beautiful light before the eyes of a real Christian, and yet do the work of an evangelist: for instance, the law says, "And it shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us," Deut. vi. 25. I may warrantably declare that the law of God allows of a surety, and that Christ, as a surety, has magnified that law, and made it honourable, Isa. xlii. 21; which law has been broken by all the

human race, infants not excepted, as appears by comparing these scriptures together: "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," Psalm xix. 7. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one," Job xiv. 4. Hence Death reigned from Adam to Moses over them, infants included, who had never sinned after the similitude, or in the practical manner, of Adam's transgression. Wherever Death reigns Sin enthrones him, either by imputation, original guilt, or actual transgression. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12.

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God [the Father's providing; of God the Son's preparing; and of God the Holy Ghost's revealing and applying;] which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe," Rom. iii. 21, 22.

I may further add, that the promised Spirit, as a covenant blessing, which is promised to all the elect, Isa. lix. 21, is Christ Jesus, and is called the spirit of love and of a sound mind, 2 Tim. i. 7. And God's love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost is of the same spiritual nature as the law; for the law is fulfilled by real love, Rom. xiii. 8. Thus a Christian, who has an imputed

righteousness on him, and a divine love in him, may say, to the honour of free grace, that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in me, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 4. For the Spirit testifies of righteousness to the believer, and sheds abroad the love of God in his heart, which attracts his affections both to God and to the child of God. "He who loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him:" love to God and our neighbour are the two grand hinges on which hangs the ministry of all the law and the prophets.

A gospel minister may further evangelize the law; for instance, the law saith, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Now, if I prove to a real Christian that God is his father, John xx. 17; and that the church is his mother, Gal. iv. 26; in a gospel sense, I may likewise warrantably prove, by virtue of a covenant of promise, that God is his life and the length of his days, Deut. xxx. 20; and that he will to all eternity be enjoyed by him in that land which is very far off, Isa. xxxiii. 17; which the Lord God giveth us. Thus a gospel minister may gospelize the whole law, and do the work of an Evangelist, without being charged with binding grievous burdens on men's shoulders, instead of teaching them to cast their burdens on the Lord.

The reply of some cavillers at God, and enemies to truth, is, 'If Christ hath magnified the

law, and by his magnifying obedience imputed to them God justifies sinners; and, if Christ by his death satisfied justice, vanquished death, appeased the wrath of God, and reconciled the elect world to him; what becomes of the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, the gift of life, the gift of heaven, and all the doctrines of free grace? If a surety pays the full debt to a creditor, the debtor comes out of prison by law, and can in no sense whatever be said to be forgiven.' This is a corner that the children of this world, "who are wiser in their generation than the children of light," have drove me into ere now: to which I answer, If a debtor gets a surety himself to pay the whole debt he has contracted, he is not beholden to his creditor, unless it was for trusting him. But this is not the case between God and us.' When God, the great creditor, looked down from heaven on Adam's insolvent family, he found no surety among us; there was none righteous, no not one; there was no eye to pity, or hand to help; there was none to stand in the gap, that when God demanded could answer a word; as it is written, when any of the bankrupt company came, and took hold of his brother of the house of his father Adam, saying, "Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand," he, being conscious of his own inability, refused the undertaking with an oath; as every sensible sinner will do, and "swear, saying, I will not be an healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing;

make me not a ruler of the people," Isaiah iii. 6, 7. This being the outcry of every child of the flesh, to which we are all prone to fly, God was pleased to send us a Ruler of his own providing, "whose goings forth have been from of old, yea, from everlasting," Mic. v. 2.

Now, as the creditor provided the surety, which no law ever obliged a creditor to do, I still insist upon it that law and justice are fully satisfied; and yet the doctrines of the forgiveness of sins, and of salvation by grace, are fully established. Thus God had full satisfaction, and yet is a donor: and we are delivered consistent with law and justice, and yet shall remain to all eternity debtors to free grace. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning God the creditor and his dear Son the Surety; both being equally wronged and injured by the whole race of debtors.

It is true, Moses at times, and Phineas too, have stood in the gap; but, the first representing Christ as the mediator, and the second representing him as a priest, they could close up no breach; but, as a divine appointment, substituted them in proxy for Christ. And, when all these types failed, the creditor soon made an awful seizure, crying out, 'There is none to stand before me to make up the breach.' And it grew so wide at last, that Noah, Daniel, and Job, could not have interceded with justice for one transgressor of the law, nor could he have delivered either son or daughter,

but only his own soul by his righteousness, which must be perfect as the law itself is perfect.

I come now to shew what the law can do. The law can discover sin; the knowledge of sin is by the law; for "I had not known sin but by the law." The law can magnify sin, and make it look as it really is in the sight of God, "that sin by the commandment may become exceeding sinful," Rom. vii. 13. It can give sin an advantage over the sinner; "but when the commandment came sin revived." "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, deceived me, and by it slew me." The law can furnish sin with strength sufficient to deliver up the sinner as a condemned criminal, holden in the cords of his sin, to avenging justice, and fix sin on his conscience as a never-dying worm: "the strength of sin is the law," 1 Cor. xv. 56.

The law cannot subdue sin, nor give the sinner any dominion over it. By the first transgression guilt is contracted; and the sting of death is fixed by the law, which is the ministration of death to every transgressor.

Thus the law is weak through the flesh; not weak in itself, nor weak in its accusing, terrifying, binding, and condemning nature. Nor would it be weak in justifying, if a man could obey its commands; but fallen man can give it no obedience, and consequently the law can give man no quarters. "What the law could not do, in that it

was weak through the flesh, God [hath done by] sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," Rom. viii. 3.

Satan keeps his hold under the binding and condemning power of the law. The man that disobeys the precept is bound in the chains of his transgression by the law, Isa. xlv. 14; and the devil holds dominion over him as a condemned criminal, " the prince of the power of the air [the devil], the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," Eph. ii. 2.

The law can furnish the unjustified sinner with an accuser, even in the presence of God. He who was once the mediator of that covenant is now the accuser of all that seek righteousness by the works of it. " Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." The law can keep an infinite distance between God and the sinner. Sin separates between God and the soul, Isa. lix. 2; and the law keeps the breach open, and will maintain an infinite distance; and, as a gulph fixed, keep an eternal separation between God and them who die under the sentence of it. Hence the law is said to be against us, and contrary to us, Col. ii. 14. It is in vain that we look for Moses to stand in the gap; he stands there as a mediator no more; " Moses, my servant," is dead as a mediator; but still stands in the gap that sin has made, as an accuser of the self-righteous.

The law is the husband of every soul that is alive to it, and expects life from it; and the law binds such a soul to itself, as a wife is bound to an husband; and such a mystical wife has a just right by law to all the dreadful inheritance that such a husband possesses, which is the whole magazine of eternal wrath. And, if such a sinner in time offers to catch at Christ, it is deemed an act of adultery, because the first husband is alive; but, when the sinner sees the law to be a killing letter, and betakes himself to Christ, he is become dead to it by the body of Christ, and is no adulterer, though he be married to Jesus, Rom. vii. 2—4.

The greatest advocates for the letter of the law are the greatest enemies to the spirit of the gospel. The Saviour's persecutors and murderers called themselves Moses' disciples, John ix. 28; and they were farther from the kingdom of God than publicans or harlots. And the worst persecutors of the apostles were those who were zealous of the law of Moses, Acts xxi. 20. As the Lord has often led me of late to make distinctions between the law and the gospel, as they are two distinct covenants, some have of late thought proper to discharge a few arrows from their pulpits at me for it: they ought, however, to take heed and do nothing rashly, lest they bring poor souls, who are just entering the land of promise, back again to Egypt, the way that God has said they shall go no more. God has given me to feel the

force and power of both of them, and I hope he will ever keep me from blending them together. I have narrowly observed several professors, who shewed great regard and much zeal for the law, that have afterwards sunk into the very bowels of Arminianism, and from thence into open profanity. Nay, I have been personally acquainted with several of this miserable stamp, and am much mistaken if they are not gone too far ever to come back. If the power of God is not sufficient to keep a man through faith in Christ, no legal tie will ever do.

Secondly, what the law cannot do.

It cannot pardon a sinner. The language of the law is, 'I will never hold him guiltless that taketh God's name in vain.' Nor can it ever clear the guilty by any means whatsoever; for all the sacrifices that were offered under it never made any person clean touching his conscience, Heb. ix. 9.

The law cannot make any allowance either for giddy youth or doting age; either for habitual infirmities or violent temptations. He that offends in one point is guilty of all; and heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the law shall fail, Matt. v. 18.

The law cannot quicken, or give life; it is the ministration of death and condemnation, 2 Cor. iii. 7—9; and every soul that is under it is twice dead; he is under the sentence denounced against Adam, and is born dead, and under the curse of

the law denounced against every transgressor. And such an one is exposed to its eternal sentence, unless free grace should reach him. "Had there been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." I know the law saith, "He that doeth these things shall live in them;" but I much question whether eternal life in glory be meant in this conditional promise as a blessing to be earned by works. Adam had no promise but an earthly paradise, and a derived dominion, for his obedience; he had no promise of eternal life and glory in heaven for his obedience. It is true that Jesus Christ lived in his merit; and no wonder, when he was the Lord of life and glory, the quickening spirit, the resurrection, and eternal life itself.

But, let that be as it may, his human nature was not left without a promise of life. Whether this promise was the conditional promise of the law, or an absolute promise of the better covenant, I shall not stand to inquire; but I think it was the latter. The promise is this: "For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will

be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation," Psalm xci. 11—16.

As I can find no such promises as these in the law, I take it for granted they are promises of the better covenant, and applicable enough to Christ, to whom the promises were made, and in whom they are all yea and amen; and in him, as our blessed Head, they are sure to all the seed, Rom. iv. 16. The Saviour, speaking as the son of man, intimates as much, to the honour and glory of the Father; "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." I do not perceive any thing in these assertions dishonourable to the Saviour, or to his merit; but contrariwise. If we consider that Christ's human nature was spotless, sanctified and sent into the world, inhabited by the second person in the ever-blessed Trinity, who is God over all, in union with God the Father, and in essence one with him, John x. 30; furnished with all the sevenfold graces, gifts, and blessings, of the Holy Ghost, Isa. xi. 2; all grace poured into his lips, Psalm xlv. 2; all judgment and power committed to him; all the riches of wisdom and knowledge treasured up in him, Col. ii. 3; a promise of life and glory set before him, Psal. xci. 16; and God the Father helping, and justifying him; his righteousness must be an everlasting righteousness indeed, sufficient to justify all the world, if God were pleased to impute it to them. And

surely those who call it imputed nonsense can never escape the damnation of Hell, if they die under the perilous guilt of such daring contempt of the Son of God.

The law cannot justify any man that is of the works of it, let him try his utmost: he is a debtor to do the whole commands of the law who works for life; and nothing less than a perfect, spiritual, and perpetual obedience will do to justify him who cleaves to it. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Can the law bring a sinner to Christ for life and salvation? No; it can deliver a sinner up to Christ, as the judge of quick and dead; "Agree," says the Lord, "with thine adversary quickly, lest he hale thee to the judge."

You will reply and say, Yes; the law can bring us to Christ for salvation; as it is written, "wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith," Gal. iii. 24. The words, to bring us, are in Italics, as a supplement; and I think they were neither expressed nor used in the original copy; and it is plain that those who introduced them have made that text contradict the Saviour, who hath twice declared that no man can come to him except the Father which hath sent him draw him, John vi. 44. 65; "No man can come unto me except it

were given him of my Father." This drawing, and this giving, belongs to another covenant. Thus the comer to Christ is drawn of the Father, drawn by the cord of everlasting love, as with the bands of a man, Hosea xi. 4. But there is nothing drawing in the law of commandments, God knows; it hardly tells us to run for help, much less brings us to Christ. It is the voice of grace that tells us to flee from the wrath to come.

When the law was delivered on mount Sinai there were bounds set round the mount, to keep the people from approaching the Lawgiver: and to this day those that stick the closest to the law are the farthest from God. If any law can bring a sinner to Christ it is the ceremonial law, for that represents Christ Jesus in almost every part. And, as Milton observes, Israel was trained up under it unto

> a better covenant, disciplin'd
> From shadowy types to truth;

agreeable to John i. 17;

> from flesh to spirit,
> From imposition of strict laws to free
> Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear
> To filial;

and so they were taught, says the learned author, to know that law was given on purpose to

> evince
> Their natural pravity, by stirring up

Sin against law to fight: that, when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove,
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for man,
Just for unjust, that, in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
Perform, and not performing cannot live.
So law appears imperfect.

PARADISE LOST, book xii. line 287.

The learned author intimates that it was shadowy types that led to truth. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." And I think that sacrifices, which he calls 'shadowy expiations weak,' were the most likely to bring Israel to conclude that 'some blood more precious must be paid for man,' &c.

However, if it can be proved that the moral law is sufficient to bring a sinner to Christ, I have no objection to it. But this I know, it was a powerful voice from heaven, and the words of that voice are not to be found in the law of commandments, that brought me to Christ. And I believe I felt as much of the law's condemning power as any mortal living, which, instead of bringing me to Christ, brought me to wish that there was no God, no judgment to come, no future reckoning, no eternal existence for my soul hereafter, and finally to wish I had been a beast.

I know some now who are in black despair under the law, and can describe the law in all its dreadful demands and fiery indignation, with as much sensation as any gospel minister in England; and yet it has not brought them to Christ, nor do I believe it ever will: the Spirit of faith must work a confidence in the mind before the sinner comes to God by Christ. It is faith that is the moving foot; "he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. And this faith is always accompanied with the Lord's revealed arm; "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" No coming after the Saviour till this is the case. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts xiii. 48. And all will agree that unbelief is a departing from God, Heb. iii. 12; and that faith is a coming to him; "and the law is not of faith; but the man that doeth them shall live in them," Gal. iii. 12. It is easy to prove that all the drawing, bringing, and coming to Christ, lies in unconditional promises, which must belong to the better covenant, called the covenant of promise, Eph. ii. 12.

Thus it appears that the law cannot give life, justify the sinner, or lead him to Christ; but, if any are contentious, and will have it that the law's conditional promise of life be meant of eternal life in glory, it is plain that the law promised what it cannot perform; for, if "there had

been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have come by the law;" but, as it does not, I choose not to "frustrate the grace of God, for, if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain," Gal. ii. 21. But, if only temporal life be intended in the law's promise, agreeable to the first commandment with promise, which is, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee," then, according to David's account, it is but a poor life at best that the law promises; "the days of our years are threescore years and ten; and, if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow." And labour and sorrow are of so little value to a soul that desires to be with Christ, that it is hardly worth his while to contend for it.

It appears plain to me that the man who has felt most of the law's severity will handle it the most lawfully; and he that is a stranger to the terrors of the law knows the least of the sweetness of the gospel; he that is muddy in the gospel is the same in the law. The brightest evangelist is the best law preacher, as appears by the doctrine of our dear Redeemer, who preached the gospel with such clearness as none can, and the law in such a light as none ever did. Therefore he that legally sticks to the law is sure to obscure the gospel; and the greatest advocates in pretension for the law are the greatest enemies to the

liberty of the gospel, and the vilest blasphemers of God; witness our British Pope, I mean the Arminian leader, who in shew and pretence is the greatest advocate for the law in the island of Great Britain. And I think I can defy all the annals of earth and hell to produce such dreadful blasphemy as he has taught and published. Produce me, if you can, one monster of a professor, not excluding even Cain, who has called the everlasting righteousness of the Son of God imputed nonsense, the decree of God a horrible decree, and the doctrines of election and predestination the devil's law! I defy you all to produce such blasphemy from any creature, either men or devils, till our present legal advocate appeared. We all know that God's decree of predestination was settled from eternity, before there was any devil at all; therefore it could not be any law of his. Had he laid by his doctrine of fleshly perfection, and called the corruptions of the Christian's heart, that wars against the law of his mind, the devil's law, he would have been in the right; for the devil's law it certainly is, or else it would never war against the law of God, which is written in the Christian's mind; and it is plain that the devil put it there at first, Gen. iii. 4; and labours to maintain its authority now, even in the best of saints, and in the rays of the brightest light that ever shone in a saint, Rom. vii. 22, 23.

It appears plain that the law cannot give spiritual, temporal, or eternal life; nor can the law

keep any sort of life sure to the Christian; for "the life that now is, and that which is to come," lies in a promise. Nor is a Christian to live under the law as a covenant of works; nor shall sin have dominion over them that refuse thus to live; for such are not under the law, but under grace; nor are they to serve God in that legal yoke, which none can bear, but to take Christ's yoke upon them, and serve God in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

Nor is the real saint commanded to keep the law perpetually before his eyes; but to have respect to all his commandments, and set God always before his face, that he may be at his hand in every time of danger, so that he may not be greatly moved. Thus Paul sets us a race to run, and tells us to run it "looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." And, as God has promised to keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him, and has commanded every believer to walk in Christ Jesus the Lord as they received him, I believe those Christians who take him as he has revealed himself to them; the way, the truth, and the life; will be found the best observers of the law in the end; unless we suppose that union with Christ, and a sense of pardoning love, destroys good works. However, as the Lord is the root and stock of every real Christian, union and communion with him is the only way for the tree to be made good; and Truth has said that,

" if the tree be good, the fruit will be good also."

I now pass on to shew that by faith we may understand four things.

First, the object of faith.

Secondly, the doctrines of faith.

Thirdly, the grace of faith: and,

Fourthly, the life of faith.

First, the object of faith.

The unity of the divine essence is the grand object of faith: there is one God. "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord." A plurality of persons in the unity of the Godhead is an object of faith also. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," 1 John v. 7. The nearest person to our faith is the Saviour; for it is by him that we believe in God, 1 Peter i. 21. And again; "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," as the way to him. As we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, as well as in the name of the Father and the Son, Mark xvi. 16; so are we blessed in the name of the Holy Ghost as well as in the name of the Father and the Son; "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." The distinct personality and essential divinity of the Holy Ghost are clearly asserted in the book of God, wherefore the plurality of persons in

the Godhead must be credited and acknowledged by every real believer as the object of faith. There is no coming to the full assurance of understanding until we acknowledge the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, Col. ii. 2.

Secondly, by faith we may understand the doctrines of faith, as the apostle did. "But they had heard only, that he who persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed," which I take to be meant of the doctrines that he preached. The doctrines of faith are too numerous to be all inserted here. The main and most essential points are the doctrines of the Trinity, before mentioned, the doctrines of election and predestination to life, which are always revealed to real faith. Hence faith is called, by way of distinction, the faith of God's elect, Tit. i. 1; because it is never found but in the elect of God; and because real faith lays hold on the doctrines of election, which false faith calls a horrible decree.

The doctrine of particular redemption is a doctrine of faith. Faith overcomes the frowns, the smiles, the rage, the vanities, the false religion, of the world, and the god of this world also. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." And faith does this by the blood of the Lamb. The doctrine of free justification by an imputed righteousness is a doctrine of faith; hence imputed righteousness is called, by way of

distinction, the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 11; and x. 6.

The doctrine of effectual grace changing and renewing the soul is a doctrine of faith; for every real believer is thus renewed in his measure. The final perseverance of the saints is a doctrine of faith; hence the Christian is said to be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. i. 5. The grace of faith may be implied in my text

As a most valuable blessing given of God, Eph. ii. 8; and a choice fruit of the Holy Ghost, Gal. v. 22; secured to every chosen sheep of Christ, and none else; "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," John x. 26. But those who were ordained to eternal life were also ordained to live by faith, for "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

The life and feats of faith may be implied in my text, as it is a grace that God highly honours. "All things are possible to him that believeth." And it is a grace that highly honours God, by giving all the glory to him; Abraham "was strong in faith, giving glory to God." It is a grace that attends every prevalent petition, and without it all prayer is vain. It is a grace that God is well pleased with, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." It is a grace that receives all supplies from the Saviour's fulness; hence we are said to "live by the faith of the Son of God." It is a grace that gives the Saviour a comfortable

residence, a dwelling in the heart, because it works by love to him; "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Faith is said to be "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1. Our present and eternal portion is said to lie in it; "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?" In short, it is a grace that purifies the heart, that works by love, that overcomes the world; it has subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness has made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight all the armies of the aliens. It is a grace that empties the creature, and, as a strong hand, lays hold of Christ; as an eye, it looks to Christ; as a mouth, it feeds on Christ, and brings every supply from him: and its business is to honour God, and feed the soul. Righteousness and strength, light and life, peace and joy, the blessings necessary for this life, and the glory of the next, are promised to saving faith. And it is a grace that will always shew itself by its fruits, without a person's sounding his own trumpet before him, as the hypocrites do.

I go on to prove that by preaching of faith we establish the law, and how.

First, by preaching the grand satisfaction of Christ we prove that the law is obeyed, magnified, and made honourable, by one who is equal to the lawgiver, and consequently equal to the law.

Christ thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet took on him the form of a servant, and became obedient from his birth unto his death, even the death of the cross, Phil. ii. 6—8. By Christ's life the law was made honourable, and by his death Justice got her utmost demands: thus truth, with respect to all the promises and shadows that went before concerning Christ, and salvation by him, was fully cleared; and God's honour, which was much obscured by every transgressor, was restored to its lustre and glory by the perfect obedience of his Son; and a glorious way was opened for mercy to reign triumphant, to the honour of justice.

Is the law glorious, holy, just, good, spiritual, true, and eternal? Let it be so. Christ is the express image of the Father's person, and the brightness of his glory. Is the law holy? Christ is the Holy One. Is the law just? Christ is the Just One. Is the law good? Christ is the good Shepherd. Is the law spiritual? Christ is the Lord from heaven, the quickening spirit; yea, the resurrection and the life. Is the law true? Christ is the true God and eternal life. Is the law eternal? Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. Does the law say, 'Thou shalt fear thy God?' Here is a servant on whom the Spirit of the fear of the Lord rested. Does it say, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart?' Here is a person who is really God, and God is love. Does the law say, 'Thou shalt be holy, for I the Lord

thy God am holy?' Here is one that is holy as God, holy as man, and holy as God-man, who was born a holy thing, never conceived an unholy thought, never spoke an unholy word, nor made an unholy slip with his feet. "Which of you convinceth me of sin; and, if I speak the truth, why do ye not believe me?" The devil himself justified him when he said, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." Judas justified him also when he said, "I have sinned against innocent blood." Pilate justified him when he washed his hands and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." His wife justified him when she said, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." The company of murderers justified him when they smote on their breasts, and said, "Truly this was the Son of God." The soldiers justified him when they declared the angels from heaven had rolled away the stone and sat upon it; and the rulers justified him when they said, "Take this money, and say that his disciples came by night and stole him away; and, if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and secure you." God the Father justified him by raising him from the dead, and us with him; God the Holy Ghost justifies him by testifying of his resurrection, and of his righteousness, to every believer; and the Saviour justified himself by confounding every false witness at his trial, and

striking his adversaries to the ground when they came to take him, in fulfilment of the Psalmist's prediction, "When they came to eat up my flesh they stumbled and fell."

When the divine Lawgiver saw such a wonderful person, and such a wonderful obedience, every perfection of Deity harmonized and proclaimed a combined satisfaction. Justice says, "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water," and, I am faithful and just to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness, 1 John i. 9. While the Law says, 'Get a perfect righteousness, and I will never condemn thee;' my business is to condemn the wicked, to bring his wickedness upon his own head, but to justify the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness, 2 Chron. vi. 23. Holiness says, "I am the Lord which sanctify you," Lev. xx. 8. Verity says, Receive the truth, and the truth shall make you free, John viii. 32. Light says, I will shine on those that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, Luke i. 79. Wisdom says, I lay up sound wisdom for the righteous, Prov. ii. 7; and make them wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Peace says, I proclaim "peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near," Isa. lvii. 19. Lovingkindness says, I will never leave him nor forsake him, Psalm lxxxix. 33. Faithfulness says, I will never alter the word that is gone out of my lips; my covenant will I not break, nor suffer my faithful-

ness to fail. Mercy says, I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful, and I will be built up for ever, Psalm lxxxix. 2. Omnipresence says, "And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. And Omnipotence says, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness," 2 Cor. xii. 9. Life says, "Because I live, ye shall live also," John xiv. 19. Eternity says, "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation," Isa. xlv. 17. Glory says, He raiseth up the beggars from the dunghill, and maketh them to inherit the throne of glory, 1 Sam. ii. 8. And the triune Jehovah says, They shall be made perfect in one, John xvii. 23; and "filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. iii. 19.

Thus we establish the law in the hand of the Lawgiver, to the honour of, and agreeable to, the joint declaration of all the perfections of Deity; while God justifies the ungodly. God having his law magnified by the Saviour's life, and justice fully satisfied by his death, the Saviour's obedience becomes the honourable basis of a throne of grace: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Thus God appears just, both to the precept and to the penalty of the law, even when he justifies a sinner, as it is written, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare at this time his righteousness, [or justice] that he might be just, and the justifier

of him which believeth in Jesus," Rom. iii. 25. Thus the law is established in the hand of the Lawgiver.

Secondly, we establish the law, as disarmed of its curse and condemning power, in the heart of the mediatorial king, Christ Jesus. When he came to fulfil it he said, "Thy law is within my heart," Psalm xl. 8. As the law used to be shut up in the ark, which was a true type of Christ; so Christ, having taken the sentence which was against us, and contrary to us, out of the way, nailed it to his cross, Col. ii. 14. Hence the Lord Jesus keeps the magnified and disarmed law in his own heart, and appears both a just God and a Saviour, inasmuch as he did not save any but at the expense of his blood. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price," 1 Cor. vi. 20. Thus the Christian is "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ."

Thirdly, we establish the law in the heart of every real child of God, as it is written, "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people," Jer. xxxi. 33. And by preaching up an imputed righteousness commensurate to the law, and the love of God that fulfils the law, we establish the law as fulfilled in the heart of a Christian. The law says nothing against a Surety, nothing against an imputed

righteousness, nor does it say any thing against the love of God. Hence we conclude, with the apostle, that the believer has the righteousness of Christ on him, and the love of God shed abroad in him; the first being adequate to the law, and the latter the fulfilment of it. We may therefore say, in the language of scripture, that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 4. Thus the law is established in the heart of every child of God.

Fourthly, we establish the law in the hand of justice as a covenant of works, demanding perfect and perpetual obedience of all the unconverted offspring of Adam, on penalty of damnation. And the law stands, in all its divine sanction, against every soul that is out of Christ. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse of it," Gal. iii. 10. And the just Judge of all the earth stands bound by divine verity to pass the sentence of the law on all that die under it; "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. Thus the law is established in the hands of justice, and is the immutable basis of a throne of judgment. Take away the law, and down comes the throne of judgment; for "where there is no law there is no transgression," and consequently no call for a judge, or a judgment seat. But God has prepared his throne for judgment. And we affirm that, though Christ has magnified the law,

and made it honourable, yet he never abolished, but fulfilled it, never having repealed or made it void in any sense whatever.

Fifthly, as so many of the glorious attributes of God appear in the law, and the law is divine and spiritual, so is it eternal also, and established for ever. Therefore they who die under it, as a covenant of works, shall find, to their everlasting confusion, that the law shall never pass away; that not a jot or tittle of it shall ever fail, be repealed, altered, mitigated, or abolished; but the wicked shall go away into eternal punishment. I am credibly informed that the same word, eternal, which fixes the state of the just, fixes also the doom of the damned; and every hypocrite may say what Christ declares to every unbeliever, "Whither I go ye cannot come;" ye cannot pass over the gulph fixed, to come from the regions of the dead. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall by no means come out thence till ye have paid the very last mite, Luke xii. 59. But lying in a prison never pays debts, much less can the damnation of a sinner, who will curse his Maker to all eternity, be meritorious; as some blasphemously assert, who have of late invented a second purgatory, declaring that, after sinners have lain in hell for a certain time, all, even devils, shall be restored to the divine favour; which is hard to account for, seeing there are some who never were in the divine favour at all; and that the damned shall suffer for a time, after the judgment

day, is altogether as strange, when Christ has sworn that time shall be no more. The judgment of the wicked, and time, then will both end together. All beyond time is vast eternity, and, if eternity can find a period, then may such a gaol-delivery take place. Thus we establish the sentence of the law, and the wrath and execution of it, together with all its thundering contents, in every spirit, angelic or human, even in hell. "If I make my bed in hell, thou art there also." "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."

Sixthly, we establish the law before the eyes of every real believer, as a bound that God has fixed, prohibiting all iniquity at the expense of the rod of his fatherly displeasure. "But, if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail," Psalm lxxxix. 30, 32, 33.

We establish the law in the affections of a real believer, by telling him that the law is now a friend to him, he being in Christ Jesus. The law is kind in allowing the poor debtor a Surety, the Creditor was kind in sending one, and the Surety was kind in paying the debt. The law finds no fault with an imputed righteousness; nor can it condemn the man that is found in one. "Knowing this, that the law is not made for [to

condemn] a righteous man, but for [to condemn] the lawless and disobedient," 1 Tim. i. 9.

The law is no foe to a debtor that is cleared by a surety; for instance, suppose I owe fifty pounds, and am imprisoned for it, a surety stands forth and pays the debt, and gets a receipt from the creditor; no just creditor will attempt to keep me in prison after payment: so the Christian, when he has got the witness of God in his heart, comes out by law. Thus such a change in affairs makes a terrible law a friend to a prisoner. Again, suppose an innocent person and a murderer are both sworn against, as guilty of one and the same crime, when upon a fair trial the innocent person is cleared, and the murderer cast; the same law which is an enemy to the murderer is the friend to the innocent: so here the accusing devil torments both the righteous and the wicked; but in the eyes of law and justice the righteous is found complete in Christ Jesus; Justice says, 'I see no sin in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel,' Numb. xxiii. 21. But the unjustified person is found in old Adam, under Adam's law, a hater of God and of the godly; and to such Justice says, "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Here the law, which is the adversary to the infidel, is a friend to the believer; and no wonder, when retributive Justice says, 'I am faithful and just to forgive you your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness,' 1 John i. 9.

To be brief; it is the act of a just God, and consistent with law and justice, to justify the ungodly by the imputation of the Surety's righteousness. Hence the justified soul sees law and justice, as they are found in the Mediator, both friends to him; and, having a righteousness on him that is commensurate with the law, the language of his faith is, "With my mind I serve the law of God." Such a soul knows that love is the fulfilling of the law; and, as love is the very soul of the new creature, he can say, in holy triumph, "I delight in the law of God after the inner man." And he that walks in faith and love walks in the commandments of the Lord blameless; nor has such a soul any just cause to be ashamed, having a respect to all the commandments. Thus we establish the law, as disarmed of its curse and condemning power, by Christ, before the eyes, and in the affections, of every real believer. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid, Yea, we establish the law."

If the legalist that works for life can get the inheritance, then faith is made void, and the promise of God of none effect, Rom. iv. 14. But "is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid," Gal. iii. 21. And, if preaching of faith overthrows the law, then the law is made void. But "do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid," says my text. Thus the law is established without any prejudice to the promise, and faith in the promise is established without any

prejudice to the law. I now go on to shew who they are who make void the law.

The deist acknowledges no Saviour, no gospel, no judgment to come; consequently no Judge, and consequently no law. Thus he makes void both law and gospel, and calls it a system of empty priestcraft.

The universal lover, who declares that God never made any man to damn him, but that all will be saved, whether elect or not, by the doctrine of universal redemption; he dethrones justice, removes, by his damnable heresy, the judgment seat, and consequently leaves the law void of its just possessor; because justice and judgment are the habitation of God's throne, Psal. lxxxix. 14. And, if justice and judgment be taken away, the just God and the Judge must of necessity go also. Thus their doctrine makes void the law, and leaves it without its just inhabitant.

Thirdly, the blind guide, who tells us that Christ came to give a remedial law, to mitigate the severity of the decalogue, and to set us an example by his holy life, that we might imitate him in his walk, and be able to keep this mild law; he makes void the law, by setting up one of his own contriving.

And those that tell us that good works are meritorious in the sight of God, and that God is merciful and knows our failings, and will not be so extremely severe as his law represents him, but in his mercy will accept the will for the deed,

and that we are to entertain the best opinion of his mercy, while truth and justice are kept out of sight; such explain away the sentence of the law, and all the wrath of God revealed in it, and so leave it empty, void, and waste, by taking away or obscuring all the dreadful contents of it.

Fourthly, the Arian, who takes away, by his damnable heresy, the Godhead of Christ, takes away also the divinity, the spirituality, the immutability, and the eternity, of the law, by declaring that the Surety is no more than a mere man. The surety must be equal to the law; and, if a mere man was sufficient to fulfil it, and redeem us from under it, then there could be no divine sanction belonging to it. Thus he makes void the glory of the law, by telling poor proud mortals that the active and passive obedience of a creature is sufficient to ransom from death, and to justify, thousands of souls before God. Thus he eclipses the honour and glory of all the intrinsic perfections of God that appear in the law, and leaves it empty, and void of all the glory of God that appeared on the face of Moses: and he strips the law of all its divine glory, by stripping the Saviour of his Godhead; and, consequently, strips the Saviour's merits of their infinite and eternal worth and dignity. This he does when he tells us that God might have made a saviour of him, if he had chosen.

Those who labour to stuff the weaklings in faith, who are galled with the yoke of the law,

with forms and modes of human composition, in order to heal the dreadful wound, telling them that keeping the sabbath, keeping their church, and coming to the Lord's table, is the only way; instead of leading them to the liberty of the Spirit in Christ Jesus: these make void the thundering power of the law; and, by leading them to works of the flesh, they lead them to the law of works for establishment.

And those who tell us that assuming the gown, and reading the form of prayer, is the only way to entangle sinners, by fighting them with their own weapons, do in effect make void the law; as if that, when lawfully handled under God, was not sufficient to convince the sinner, bring him in guilty, and stop the mouth of boasting, without the crafty inventions of men. Such wise gentlemen had better lay by their weapons, and take those that are not carnal, "but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. x. 4. The man that entangles a people in the yoke of priestcraft, and sets human inventions and human learning perpetually before their eyes, establishes the faith of his followers in the wisdom of men instead of the power of God; and, as far as he goes in this work, so far he makes the commandments of God of none effect by his traditions.

And preaching neither law nor gospel purely, but a jumble of both; beginning a discourse with old wives' fables and country tales; coming almost to the purity of the gospel in the middle of the discourse, and ending with hell and damnation; is very little better; for it looks as if there were no evangelical fruits of obedience to be produced by the grace of God; but that all must be forced, as asparagus or cucumbers are, with a violent and disagreeable heat. If we do not rightly divide the word of truth, we make a false jumble both of law and gospel; and, as far as we confound or blend the two covenants together, so far we ob scure the flames of justice and the rays of the gospel, and in a sense make neither effectual. I have heard many such confused jumbles of law and gospel, linen and woollen, together, Deut. xxii. 11; oxen and asses in one yoke, Deut. xxii. 10; and diverse seeds scattered in one soil, Lev. xix. 19; all which God strictly forbids. Such jumbles serve to convince the godly that such preachers' hearts are wholly void of the power of either law or gospel.

And they do very little better than make void the lawful use of the law, who are continually using it as the only way to reclaim, reform, and moralize, poor sinners, without aiming at their conversion to God. There can be no fruits brought forth to the glory of God without transplanting and ingrafting. The sinner must be translated from darkness to light, 1 Pet. ii. 9; and be in-

grafted into Christ by faith, and united to him in the bond of divine love, before he can bring forth fruit unto God. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Preaching the law perpetually, or even gospel doctrines in a law spirit, may put Satan in fear of losing his habitation, and in his infernal policy the unclean spirit may go out of the man; but, if he returns as an angel of light to illuminate, 2 Cor. xi. 14; as a spirit of self-righteousness, Luke xviii. 14; a spirit of pride in a reformation, Prov. xxx. 12; a spirit of insensibility, Rev. iii. 17; a spirit of vain confidence, Job xviii. 14; a spirit of blind zeal, Gal. iv. 17; and as a spirit of carnal security, attended with false joy, Matt. xiii. 6; these seven devils, entering into the heart of the reformed, make the last state of that man worse than the first, Matt. xii. 45. And, when such preachers or professors, thus reformed, turn Arians, Antinomians, or, what is still worse, Arminians; then all are astonished at their departure from their confession; when, alas, the instrumental cause of the pupil's apostasy was the tutor's mongrel ministry! Let some in our days look to this, who have often suffered loss in the fiery trial; and the fault lies in the mixed materials, of wood, hay, and stubble, jumbled with the gold, silver, and precious stones of the gospel, 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13.

Those who catch a few gospel truths in their head, while destitute of, and sneerers at, an heart-felt experience of the force and power of truth on the soul, make void both law and gospel in their life and conduct, while they herd with the wicked, boast of vain confidence, and prate in sinful company about the word of God. Such proclaim to the world that they are under no yoke; they are neither awed by the law, nor constrained by the gospel; they are vain in their imaginations, and, though their head be enlightened, yet their foolish heart is darkened, Rom. i. 21. But this will be the case where the heart never was united to, nor any pleasure taken in the happy enjoyment of, Christ Jesus.

I come now to make a modest inquiry whether the decalogue of itself, exclusive of the promises and other parts of scripture, be a sufficient and a scriptural rule for the real Christian's life, walk, and conversation.

The word Rule in scripture chiefly means two things; first, dominion, government, or authority; either given of God, or usurped. "By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth," Prov. viii. 16; and again, "As for my people, women rule over them." But the law as a covenant of works, is not to reign and rule over a believer, no; "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14; we are under the law in no other sense than to Christ, 1 Cor. ix. 21. Christ is the be-

liever's supreme Head and Ruler; "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be the Ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Secondly, the word Rule in scripture sometimes means an instrument, by which lines are drawn; "the carpenter stretcheth out his rule, he marketh it out with a line: he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass."

Now, as a rule is an instrument to work by, the law, if it be a sufficient rule of life, must be an instrument of government, given by the supreme Ruler for a Christian to work by, to live by, to walk by, and to converse by.

I once had a dispute with a good minister of Jesus Christ, who, I believe, argued with me out of love. He insisted upon it that the decalogue, or ten commandments, was the believer's only rule of life; which he tried to prove by quoting some passages out of Paul's epistle to the Romans; if I am not mistaken, the words are in the 9th and 10th verses of the 13th chapter. He said that the Romans, to whom Paul wrote, were believers in Jesus Christ, and that Paul sent those commandments to them as a rule of life. We did not altogether agree in these things; but parted very good friends, and I hope we shall always continue so.

A rule of divine life the decalogue can never be; for life comes not by working, or walking;

life is the gift of God, a blessing of the covenant of grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and so before there was any law at all. Nor is spiritual life kept up either by working or walking, but by believing; nor is it treasured up in the law, for Christ is our life; and we live by the faith of the Son of God. "He that believeth hath everlasting life; and whosoever liveth and believeth shall never die." The decalogue is neither the fountain nor the rule of divine life to a Christian; for the law quickens none. Divine life came from another fountain, and is kept up by another rule.

As it is not a rule of divine life, let us try it as a rule of direction for a believer in all that he does, and in all that befalls him in this life. We will, in the first place, bring some of the actions of former saints, and some of our own also, and lay them to the decalogue as the only rule, and see how they will fit.

We read that, when Abraham heard that his brother Lot was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he, and his servants, by night, and smote them; and Melchisedec, the priest of the most high God, went out and met him, and in the name of God blessed him, as soon as he returned from the slaughter of the kings, Gen. xiv. 14—19. Heb. vii. 1. These kings had not declared war with Abraham, nor had they

invaded his property, that he should kill them; nor had they killed his brother, that he should avenge his blood; for Abraham brought Lot back alive. Now lay these things to the decalogue, as the only rule, and see how they fit. "Thou shalt not kill."

But you may object, and say that that commandment was not extant in the days of Abraham; I say, it was, and that Cain had felt the heavy curse due to murder above two thousand years before Abraham was born; and the commandment was given in plain words to Noah, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man," Gen. ix. 6. Abraham attempted and intended to have offered up his own son, and drew the knife to do it, and in his heart did so. But God received him as a burnt-offering in a figure, accepting his servant's obedient will for the real deed. Lay this to the same rule, and it will lie crooked also. Phineas, the son of Aaron the high priest, kills Zimri and Cozbi in the act of adultery, Num. xxv. and is commended of God for his zeal. This lies as crooked as the other by that rule.

Jacob covets his brother's birthright, and takes advantage of his brother's hunger, and of his pious father's blindness, to get it; lies into the bargain; and is blessed of God after he has got it. Lay this to the same rule, "Thou shalt not covet;" and it lies as crooked as the other. But

though the law says, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath."

Egyptians had spoiled them. And this is agreeable to God's rule of equity, or retaliation, "When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled," Isa. xxxiii. 1.

Fourthly, as Pharaoh set them to work without straw, and ordered them a double task to perform, and beat them that could not perform it; no doubt but he was as sparing in paying them for their labour as he was of straw to do the work with, money being a thing that generally sticks closer to an oppressor than straw. If this was the case, God kept Israel's daybook; and, if Pharaoh kept back their due by subtlety, God made Israel get his just wages by subtlety. Whichever way it was, it is clear that all which the Israelites got from Egypt was either promised to or earned by them.

Fifthly, the rules of liberality entitled Israel to more than they got. Man is to do as he would be done by, and is awfully threatened for rendering evil for good, Prov. xvii. 13. Joseph had saved alive all the land of Egypt, according to Pharaoh's own words; therefore he called him Zaphnath Paaneah, a revealer of secrets, and a saviour of the land; and, as he had bought all the land of Egypt for the crown, it was most wretchedly inhospitable to inflict acts of slavery, and send death warrants against them, from the very crown that had been enriched by them. But the sweetest thought seems to be this; as the tabernacle was built, and adorned with the spoils and jewels of Egypt, it was to shew that some of the Egyptians should be found in Christ, the great antitype of the tabernacle, in that day when the Lord maketh up his jewels, Mal. iii. 17; agreeably to the promise, "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt, and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance," Isa. xix. 24, 25.

If we lay our daily trials and cross providences to the decalogue as the only rule, we shall find ourselves as much at a loss to make them compact with that, as Asaph was when he envied the prosperity of the wicked, was pricked in his reins, and said he had cleansed himself in vain; and he owned that his feet had well nigh slipped, for he was envious at the foolish when he saw that they were not in trouble, Psalm lxxiii. 2—5. Nor could he find it out till he went into the sanctuary of God, and then he understood their end. And he certainly had some other rule to go by. A good man buried in afflictions, and a wicked man swimming in prosperity, are such knotty and intricate providences as have puzzled five very eminent prophets, Hab. i. 2—4; Exod. v. 21—23; Mal. iii. 15; Lam. iii; Psal. lxxiii; therefore I take it for granted that they found out some other rule for these things. For, as Asaph had well nigh slipped with his feet, so I think that we shall be puzzled to make straight paths for our feet, if we can find no other rule than the decalogue for all our trials.

As many things in a Christian's life and walk seem to come short of, or lay crooked to, that rule, we must look out for another; and there is one rule that all these things will lay straight with, and there is no other. And that rule is, the sovereign, absolute, and uncontrollable will of God in Christ Jesus. God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; consequently

all things will lay straight with that rule; and that we shall find if we bring them there.

Some may object, and say that the whole will of God is revealed in the decalogue; to which I answer, that it cannot be proved. The mystery of God's will, with respect to election in Christ, redemption, justification, and sanctification by Christ, which is the sweetest part of the will of God that ever a sensible sinner heard of, is not so much as mentioned in all the decalogue; nor is there an absolute unconditional promise in it.

And the will of God, in an absolute and unconditional promise, is a rule often wanted by poor distressed believers to lay their troubles to; and, when they bring their knotty providences and sore distresses under the word, and find that the minister lays all to that rule, and makes it comport, they often go away satisfied. For instance, a man that really fears and loves God, and desires to live and act to his honour, but cannot pay his way, nor let religion shew its beauty on him because of dejecting circumstances; neither keep his rebellious heart from rising, though it be the desire of his soul to be holy, and to please God above every thing else; yet this man has nothing but mountains of difficulties before him; crooked providences daily entangle him; and the more fervent and sincere he seems to be, the rougher his path is. This has often been my case, and a puzzling one it is. Lay this to the will of God in the decalogue, and it will tell you to make

use of no unlawful means to extricate yourself; but it gives no encouragement nor information of the matter. Now, if we bring these things to God's will as revealed in a promise, we shall find both information and encouragement; for instance; "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Thus these difficulties, mountains, and crooked paths, will lay straight by this rule, but by no other.

Peter, who really loved the Lord in his heart, and I believe spake as he meant when he said, "Though all men be offended because of thee, yet will not I;" little expected the Lord should say, "Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice." Again, "Some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end," Dan. xi. 35; as poor Peter here did; and I believe he stood better afterwards than before, and that it was the will of God to push him from his fleshly confidence. If all these things are laid to the ten commandments as the believer's only rule, they will be found crooked and perplexing enough.

As this rule, or the decalogue, is not sufficient, exclusive of the promises, and other parts of God's word, for a Christian's mysterious life and

perplexing walk, so I take it for granted that it is not sufficient for his conversation neither. For instance, I may say, "All thy works praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints bless thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power. To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." Psalm cxlv. 10, 11. The decalogue says nothing about this. It is true, there is a passage in another part of the law which says, "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," Deut. vi. 6—8. But we may talk of eternal election and predestination; of everlasting love and blessed redemption; of all-conquering grace; of mysterious providence; of the blessed Spirit's work on our souls; and of the comfort we feel of mercy to us, and of judgment to the wicked; and, though the decalogue says nothing about these things, yet lay them to God's will as revealed in the promise, and it appears to be the pure language that God has given us, and is called a good conversation in Christ. Hence I conclude that the ten commandments, exclusive of other parts of scripture, are not a sufficient rule for the real believer's life, walk, and conversation. And that the will of God, which is the only rule, is not

wholly revealed in the decalogue is plain; for, if it had, there would have been no more of it revealed in another dispensation. "For, if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second."

I go on to inquire, seventhly and lastly, whether setting the law perpetually before all ranks of Christians as the only rule of life can with propriety be called speaking the language, or doing the work, of an evangelist.

I believe there are many ministers who labour often at the law, for fear that the pure liberty of the Spirit of God, which David calls a free Spirit, should lead to licentiousness. But, if the Spirit of love is not sufficient to constrain, the terrors of hell will not be sufficient to deter; and, if the Spirit of love will not produce good fruits, the pains of hell will never extort them. He that feels the most law terrors feels also the most enmity to God. And that minister who is continually setting the law of Moses as a rule of life before all ranks of Christians, young and old, goes the ready way to bring them whom God has justified a second time to judgment, by setting the terrors of the judge before the child instead of the bowels of the Father.

I have often observed, when hearing a sermon, and the power of God has attended the pure truth that was delivered, so that the dew of heaven seemed to drop upon every branch, when the conclusion has drawn near, a word of caution to the

just, and a word of warning to the wicked, has been sufficient to dry up all the dew that fell on the floor, Judges vi. 39; and to wither all the budding hopes that moved in the weakling's heart. We cannot call this keeping the best wine till the last. It is more like the profuse cow that gives a pailful of milk, and then kicks it over the milk-maid.

This is a method of preaching rarely to be found in the ministry of Christ, the apostles, and the prophets. Where you have one instance of this you have five of another method. They generally described the saint and the sinner, gave the promise to the one and the judgment as a warning to the other, and applied as they went on; and either concluded with exhortation, or finished abruptly, and left the dew where it fell. Hence it is that we often find, through many of the prophets, here an unconditional promise and there a dreadful judgment denounced; thus they are intermixed, and scattered up and down throughout the Bible; and the new-born heir of promise will be sure, as soon as he feels the use of the hand of faith, to go after the good old reapers, and glean them up.

A Christian is an heir of promise, and the promises are his by donation; and they are mingled with reproof, caution, admonition, encouragement, counsel, instruction, advice, and exhortation; and are his food, his rods, his landmarks, his bank-notes, and his purging draughts. And while we

are feeding the strong with judgment we ought to have a care of the poor of the flock, Zech. xi. 7. I have often observed that, while God has enabled me to describe real faith, the new birth, sound conversion, &c. and shew what a real believer or a child of God is, and his privileges, an attentive unbeliever has received light sufficient to see that he had neither part nor lot in that matter; he has been cut with grief, provoked to jealousy, envied the happiness of the just, viewed them as angels, when compared to himself, and has gone crying, 'Oh that I were but one of them!' And the work has been carried on from that hour. Thus God gives testimony to the word of his grace. I believe there are many living witnesses now in London, who have been awakened under me in this manner.

Therefore God does not always awaken sinners by the application of a law sentence; so far from it, it may be seen to a demonstration that those who deal most in law terrors have the least success and the foulest church; for the broken-hearted fly from the storm, "and embrace the rock for want of a shelter;" while the eye-servant, the refined Pharisee, the hardened hypocrite, and the sleepy formalist, stand it out, having no more sensation than a woolpack. We may compare these to a troop of horse, or a blacksmith's dog, which are not afraid of fire. There is no domestic animal more in the way than a fire spaniel, and no greater plague to a preacher than a hardened hypocrite.

I know that preaching law terrors perpetually is called faithful preaching; and I have heard people say, 'I wonder that such a minister is attended with such a dressy, sleepy, unattentive, and unreformed congregation; he has no success, and yet he trims them in a most faithful manner.' When I have heard these things I have secretly thought that the faithful trimming was the only impediment that lay in the way of success. We may say of such hearers as Luther did, when some of his zealous followers wanted to pull down a popish idol. 'Let it alone; if we can preach Christ into their hearts, they will pull it down themselves.'

Nor can I call it faithful preaching in any sense; for, if the law be preached to incline, reform, amend, convert, and bring to Christ, that is a work it never was intended to do. God turns the sinner, makes him willing, puts his fear in his heart, and draws him to Christ, and by love unites him with him. This power is promised in the gospel; hence the gospel is called "the power of God unto salvation." And, if such a preacher takes a gospel text, and delivers it in his accustomed law spirit, it is still the same; for, though the text be a part of the word of the Lord that went forth from Jerusalem, yet the earthquake, the wind, and the fire, are still from Horeb. Whereas, if the Spirit as well as the text had been from Jerusalem, we might hope that the same wind and fire that once shook the apostles' house,

and inflamed their hearts, would have attended it more or less.

Nor is such preaching dealing faithfully with poor sinners, for such are but ministers of the letter, and the letter killeth, 2 Cor. iii. 6. The man that sounds an alarm from Sinai should plainly point out the door of hope; and he that thunders from the storm should never forget to clear the road to the refuge.

Legal preaching supports the fear of a criminal, and has a tendency to stir up an unbearable malice against God himself. This may be seen with a witness among the Arminians, who have obscured the light of the gospel, and confounded and blinded their hearers with the smoke of the law, till the effects of their ministry are conspicuously seen on the faces of the hearers. Poor souls have been rallied with the tempest till the thunder is fixed on their visages. Not long ago the following was delivered from one of their pulpits, 'Up and be doing; now is the time to get your names written in the Lamb's Book of Life! No decree, no eternal decree! No, Lord, that be far from thee; that be far from thee, Lord.'

No encouragement here; poor comfort, and worse establishment. Such preachers are like the wood culver, or wild pigeon, whose perpetual note is 'Doo, doo;' and any country boy, that is noted for rifling birds' nests, will tell you that they are the worst builders in all the wood; or, as the

Saviour says, "They say, and do not." I hope God will serve them as he did Job, who wrapped himself up so securely in his own merit that he hoped to die in it. "I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out; and I broke the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." These were good fruits, but no Saviour. "Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand," Job xxix. 16—18. But God sent a storm that tore his nest to pieces; and when he was illuminated more clearly he forsook the tree, and built in the rock, making a better nest at the end than at the beginning.

Setting the law perpetually before all ranks of Christians, as the only rule of life, is neither speaking the language, nor doing the work, of an evangelist.

An evangelist is one who is a happy partaker of the love of God, rejoices in it, and has received the blessings of a free salvation into his heart. To speak the language of an evangelist is to proclaim under God, in God's message, and in God's name, what God has done for his own soul, as a true witness of what a person has seen, heard, and felt, 1 John i. 1. And to do the work of an evangelist is to declare, as God commanded Paul, what God has done for him and shewn to him, and to prove it by the word of God; and, if God owns and blesses it, so as to lead another into the same happy enjoyment of life, love, and

peace, that the preacher feels, so far he does the work of an evangelist, and such a disciple is evangelized.

But setting the law perpetually before all ranks of Christians, as the only rule of life, is the only way to legalize them.

For, when a young convert begins to find his weaning time draw on, and his corruptions stir afresh, he will cry out, in the bitterness of his soul, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Let him bring this old man to the legal rule, and he will try in vain to make him lie straight with that.

But we know it is the will of God that the old man should remain in the regenerate: then let the old man be laid to another rule, namely, the whole will of God; and he may say in his trouble as Paul did, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vii. 24, 25.

When persecutions and oppositions come on the young believer he will never make them lie straight by the legal rule; yet no Christian ought to be moved by these afflictions, but be taught the will of God herein, and be led to know that they are, by God's will, appointed thereunto, 1 Thess. iii. 3. Hence I conclude that the whole will of God in Christ, as revealed in the scriptures of truth, is the Christian's only and all-sufficient rule.

The holy law of God is an immutable boundary fixed, prefigured by the bounds that were set

round the mount when God appeared on it, to let sinners know the awful distance and disproportion there is between a holy God and apostate rebels. And this boundary is a chain of positive commands and prohibitions: "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt not" is fixed like Aaron's bells quite round about. And the man that breaks through these bounds, if he dies in the breach, God will break through upon him; and the believer that breaks through these bounds, God has promised to visit his sin with the rod, and his iniquity with stripes.

And I think that setting the law of God as a covenant of works perpetually before the eyes of a believer, is the only way to lead him to break it; for the strength of sin is the law; but victory over it is the gift of God; therefore we ought to enforce communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son by the Spirit; and sin shall not have dominion over them who are thus under grace.

We have many who are so fond of Arminianism, though they do not like to be thought so, that, if you get a little of the electing love of God in a discourse, yet the poor weakling is sure to receive a knock over the head with Moses' rod before he can quit the place. And some are so sparing of grace, and so profuse with the works of the law, that grace is almost hid; such are "turned aside unto vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what

they say nor whereof they affirm." Such preaching furnishes reformed Pharisees and hardened hypocrites with weapons against the children of God, and is offering violence to the Spirit in his work: as Milton says, it binds his consort liberty, and puts the saints of God to shame before the legal professor.

When a man begins to give up truth a lie will soon fall in his way; he that gives up his principles will soon give up his practice also; they both abide or go together. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation." Let a man give up the truth as it is in Christ, and the father of lies shall soon find him out, and shew the world both his nakedness and his shame, Rev. iii. 18. All the legal bounds that have been set by God or man will be broken through by a child of Satan, if grace prevents not.

But the child of God is of another spirit; his Father's frowns, rods, and rebukes, together with the loss of joy, peace, and comfort, is a hell to him, and will have more weight with him than all the laws in the world.

To continue in the mysterious path, and under the cross providences and inward struggles between grace and corruption (it being our strength to stand still in the midst of dangers), Isa. xxx. 7; to rejoice in our infirmities, that the power of Christ migh trest upon us, 2 Cor. xii. 9; counting it all joy when we fall into divers temptations;

telling the weak to call themselves strong, Joel iii. 10; and that the lame shall take the prey, Isa. xxxiii. 23; believing in Christ for justification—is the only way to obtain and abide in the divine favour; while working under the law is contracting an infinite and eternal debt, Rom. iv. 4; and they are things that want the will of God as a rule to lay them to, or else they will lie as crooked as Rahab's selling and betraying her country by faith in Christ would do, and being justified in the very act, while she received the spies with peace.

When the Lord called Paul he revealed to him the mystery of his will. "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth; for thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard," Acts xxii. 14, 15. There was Paul's rule, namely, the will of God; and all Paul's doctrines, experiences, difficulties, successes, and the whole course or extent of his ministry, was chalked out by that rule. "To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line," 2 Cor. x. 16. David, prophesying of these things, says, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world; in them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun," Psal. xix. 4; which Paul applies to the apostolic days, "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the

ends of the world," Rom. x. 18. Paul brings the whole circle of his ministry, that fell to his lot, as marked out by the will of God: "But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you." Paul gathered that the rule, which had marked out the work of his ministry, would discover itself in its longitude far beyond Corinth. "Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly."

The apostle having declared the Galatians bewitched for adhering to legal preachers, and that those who adhered to them were fallen from the system of grace delivered to them, goes on to shew, by Moses and Abraham, by Sarah and Hagar, by Isaac and Ishmael, by the heavenly and the earthly Jerusalem, the difference between the two covenants; the awful state of the fleshly family under the first, and the blessed state of the spiritual family under the second; comes with many appeals to their consciences, and inquires if they received the Spirit by the works of the law? If Christ, who wrought miracles among them, did them by the works of the law? And then insists upon it that circumcision and uncircumcision avail nothing; but a new creature is essential to salvation, and faith that worketh by love; and then

concludes, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 16.

The apostle having declared without hypocrisy the whole counsel of God, or the mystery of his will in Christ revealed to him, unto the Philippians, goes on to tell them what he was by nature, and what by grace; what he had in view, and what he pressed after; the end he aimed at, and what progress he had made; saying, "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing," Phil. iii. 16. And it is clear to me that the decalogue is not meant by any of these accounts as the apostle's only rule.

But, alas, we have too many, who pass for leaders, that are strangers both to the pains of hell and the joys of heaven; and, when these have spent the trifles gathered at the schools, they are at a loss for an inward guide; and, as the way to Horeb lies plain to the views of flesh and blood, they naturally act as Moses did, they lead the flock of their father in law, not their real father, to the back side of the mount, and then stand and wonder to see the bush all on fire; when it is the shepherd's bad leading that occasions the bush to burn.

I bless God, who in the multitude of his mercies did not send me out until he had made me sensible both of the terrors of the law and the blessings of the gospel; and never has left me to

myself as yet, to turn like a weathercock, a swift, or a weeping willow, with every wind. And I can truly say that my soul hates to see a minister muzzle truth, bite it in two, keep it back, or cover the force of it, by a sudden jumble of law and gospel; while conscience alters the visage, and God confounds and fetters the tongue.

God knows I am no scholar, nor am I endued with any shining parts or abilities; but I find, by happy experience, that the best rule to walk, and try others and their doctrines, by, is the revealed will of God by the Spirit in the heart, and in his word. And I believe to enforce the Spirit's work; to insist on a union in the bond of love to Christ; to declare the whole will of God as revealed in his word; to cry down forms, and set up spiritual prayer; to cry down priestcraft, and set up the gospel model; to preach down human inventions, and set up the will of God; to cry down the works of the flesh, and exalt the merits of Christ; is doing the work of an evangelist.

And I believe that, if God should use me as an instrument in bringing souls to the Lord, and keep me alive in my ministry, insisting on the enjoyment of a union with him, I shall be able to bring forth as much fruit to God's honour as those that produce them by fire; for all hot-house fruits have the worst flavour, though they always fetch the best price among the rich and the great.

Christian, hast thou put on Jesus Christ? Then walk ye in him. Art thou in the race? Run it, looking to Jesus. Art thou in the love of God? Meditate thereon. He will keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him.

It appears plain to me that the sacrifices, which properly belong to the ceremonial law, were a schoolmaster to bring souls to Jesus Christ for above two thousand years. Before the law of Adam was republished on Sinai the sacrifices served as a schoolmaster from the days of Abel to the days of Moses; and "through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them," Heb. xi. 28. This command of sacrificing the lamb was a schoolmaster sufficient to lead them to see that there was no covert from avenging justice but under the atoning blood; and by faith Moses kept that passover, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.

I doubt I shall tire my reader, but I must desire his company a little further.

When God gave the law to Israel in the wilderness he found them wrapped up in a threefold cord of vain security.

First, as Abraham was blessed of God, and called God's friend, they being his offspring, judged this blessing and friendship to be hereditary; and they were more confirmed in this their opinion by the wonders that God wrought against the Egyptians in their favour. This prevailed

among them down to the days of Christ; and this is in the mouth of every Jew to this day, "We are Abraham's seed." The Lord shews us in a parable that some in hell have not done with this notion altogether; being in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and cried, saying, "Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame," Luke xvi. 24.

Secondly, God had told them that they should be his people; "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians," Exod. vi. 7. This they vainly stuck to, that they were all God's peculiar people, whether they were in the Spirit or in the flesh. Hence, in their rebellion, they tell Moses that the people are all holy. Hence also, when God destroyed Korah and his company, they bred a mutiny, telling Moses and Aaron that they had destroyed the people of the Lord, Num. xvi. 41.

Thirdly, they entertained a vain conceit of their own ability to perform whatever God required: "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient," Exod. xxiv. 7.

When God gave the law on Sinai he ordered bounds to be put round the mount, to teach them that, instead of friendship, there was an awful distance; and it was to be at the peril of their souls if they but attempted to gaze. The law being given with fire, smoke, the sound of a

trumpet, and the trembling of the earth, led them to see that there was terrible majesty in God, and wrath revealed: this might stagger their conceit of their being all God's favoured and peculiar people. The law being given with such a thundering voice, and so dreadfully strict, they felt that it gendered to bondage, begetting a dreadful fear, quaking, and trembling among them: when they felt this some began to stagger in their confidence of ability to perform what God required; therefore they could not endure that which was spoken.

Being thus convinced of the awful distance between God and them, of the terrible majesty and revealed wrath of God, and of the strictness required by the law, they began to call about them for a mediator; and God promises his dear Son as a mediator, and a prophet like unto Moses. This appears to me to be all the schooling that the children of Israel got here.

Now Moses sets up a tabernacle in their sight; puts the two tables of stone, with their dreadful contents, in the ark; keeps them out of their sight; and places a mercy-seat on the ark, where God promises to commune with them. Then Moses consecrates the Levites to be priests; orders the guilty sinner to bring his victim to the priest; the guilty was to confess, and so transfer his guilt on the head of the brute, and then it was to be killed in his sight; that blood was to be sprinkled toward the mercy-seat; and the pardon, blessing, and

answer of peace, were to come from thence, and no where else.

Now I will leave any wise man to judge which of these two laws was the schoolmaster to bring the sinner to Christ. The moral law convinced them that there was no access to God without a mediator, and there it left them. But what is to become of the smoke and fire? There must be blood to quench that. God appeared a consuming fire, and dwelt in thick darkness; the sacrifices led to the blood of Christ, which alone could quench that flame; and from the sacrifice their faith was led to a communing place, a mercy-seat, where God appeared in a calm, and communed like a friend, and blessed them like a reconciled God indeed.

The ceremonial law is by Paul called their gospel; and it is the business of the gospel to bring souls to Christ: but there is no bringing hand nor drawing cord promised, nor revealed, in all the decalogue. Paul says it is blood that brings a sinner nigh to God, Eph. ii. 13; not the revelation of damnation. And it is plain that those who stick the closest to the works of the law are the furthest from God.

A real believer is redeemed from under the law, and delivered from it, in every sense as a covenant of works; "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And we

are delivered from the law as a covenant of works; "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

Secondly, we are delivered from the commanding power of the law as a covenant of works; which command is, "This do, and thou shalt live." Christ did this; and the just man lives by his faith in him, Hab. ii. 4. If we are not delivered from the commanding power of the law as a covenant of works, then Christ's righteousness avails nothing. If believers are under the commanding power of the law they must be under the condemning power also; and then redemption and imputed righteousness are both frustrated. "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof," Heb. vii. 18. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace," Eph. vi. 15. I know this passage rather refers to the ceremonial law; yet the children of God are delivered from the commanding and condemning power of the law as a covenant of works. This will appear if we consider what God says of circumcision, that it binds a man to keep the whole law: "I Paul say unto you that, if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is

a debtor to do the whole law." But God has delivered us from the galling yoke; and it is tempting God to gall a believer's neck with it, seeing he has provided him another yoke.

The Gentiles, in several cities, having received the gospel by Peter, Paul, and Barnabas, were shortly after plagued by some that came down from Jerusalem, saying, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved." After many obstinate disputes with them, Paul, Barnabas, and others, were sent to the elders at Jerusalem about this point. When they came to the elders, and had rehearsed the business, "there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." There is the yoke, Do and live. "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost as he did unto us: and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear? Acts xv. 1—10. And it was all settled that by faith in Jesus Christ we are delivered from the unbearable yoke of

doing for life; and that it was tempting God to yoke them with it again.

We are delivered also from the condemning power of the law: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13.

Thus the real believer is delivered from the commanding and condemning power of the law as a covenant of works; the tenor of which is, Do and live, transgress and die.

As the second tables of stone were put into the ark under the mercy-seat, so that the law did not destroy any priest that came with blood, though he approached even God himself; so all believers, being a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. ii. 9, approach God without any legal arrest when they carry the blood of sprinkling in the hand of faith: and this hand of faith is put out by a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, Heb. x. 22.

The law being thus disarmed of its commanding and condemning power by Christ, and magnified and made everlastingly honourable; so also is offended justice both pleased and satisfied by the Saviour's death. Thus the law is disarmed of its thundering command and sentence, and mercy reigns triumphant by Christ Jesus. Hence it appears that we have got both our law and gospel, command and promise, in the blessed object of our faith, and of our most cordial affections, agreeably to what is written, "Thy law," says the blessed Saviour, "is within my heart," Psal. xl. 8. Here

Paul fled when he said, "Not without law to God, but under the law to Christ."

Now, though I have followed the saints' law up to its proper centre, I see no reason why the decalogue, or ten commandments, should be insisted on as the only rule of life, though it be thus disarmed, and placed in the heart of a dear Redeemer; seeing God has commanded us to obey all that Christ shall say. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken [whether he commands or promises], according to all that thou desirest of the Lord thy God in Horeb." "And the Lord said, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, [promises and all, Isa. lix. 21;] and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him [whether it be the decalogue or no]. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken to my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him," Deut. xviii. 15—19.

It is a comfortable thought that we have all in the Saviour. The ceremonial law ended in Christ, and was abolished by him; the moral law was honoured and disarmed of its wrath by him, and is hid in him; every other commandment was given to him also; and all the promises were made to him, and are yea and amen in him, 2 Cor.

i. 20. So that I am led to conclude that the whole will of God in Christ Jesus is the only and all-sufficient rule of every real child of God. For I take it for granted that the power of the whole word is the rod of his strength that was sent forth out of Zion, and by that he rules in the midst of Jerusalem. And every command ought to be brought by the believer to the promises; and, when the command is resolved into the promise, it ought, with humble prayer, to be taken for its fulfilment to the reconciled Lawgiver, who in Christ Jesus is the promise-maker; and we shall find the immutable will of God promising and bestowing, through Christ, all that his commanding will requires of us; "As many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them [indeed], and upon the Israel of God." God has willed, in the New Testament, a power to subdue and incline my will to his; and while my will is under that power it will lie straight with God's commanding will; "Whoso [thus] looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in [though not for] his deed," James i. 25. And I am fully persuaded that the soul that walks in the righteousness of Christ, and in the enjoyment of God's love, may say that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, though not by him. But why every believing soul is to be sent to Horeb for such a contracted rule I know not; God has not, in any

part of the scripture, called the decalogue the saints' only rule, that I know of: therefore what he has promised we may expect; and what Christ has commanded we may do, whether it be in the decalogue or not. For instance: I think it is my duty to go constantly to the sacrament, though the decalogue says nothing about it; and I am to go two miles with the man that compels me to go one; and to turn my right cheek to him that has without cause smitten the left; to give my cloak to him that has unjustly taken my coat by a suit of law; to give, if I have it; and to lend, hoping for nothing again; though the law only tells me to do as I would be done by; for that is the law and the prophets. The saint is not to knock out a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye, nor to cut off hand for hand, nor foot for foot, though the law says he may, and it shall be so. My reader may object, and say, 'You set the gospel to contradict the law, which ought to harmonize together.' No, I do not. The saint is not under the law, as hath been proved; therefore he is to leave his injuries on the head of the injurer, who is under the law: and, as God takes all that is done to the saints as done to himself, this vengeance belongs in an especial manner to him. Hence Abel was killed for righteousness' sake, and the judgment of Cain was kept in God's hand. As Abel was murdered for God's sake, therefore God was the only avenger; and he threatens a sevenfold vengeance to any man who should even

dare to take the sword out of God's hand to kill Cain, Gen. iv. 15.

Secondly, a great part of the old laws belongs to civil justice; and the Lord foretels us that rulers and magistrates would be the saints' greatest adversaries; therefore the persecuting sinner and the encouraging ruler are both to agree, and we are to be brought before them for a witness against them. And, as we are the Lord's, so our injuries are his also; and the persecutor and the base ruler are his enemies, and ours for his sake. No wonder then that he says, "Ye have heard it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil," Matt. v. 38, 39. As the Lord in us is the person hated, and the devil in the persecutor and false magistrate the being that offends, Christ would have us, after using the means, leave both him and the law in his own hand, who is the Judge of both quick and dead; and he will have an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, with a witness. Thus the patient submission of the oppressed, and the partiality of the magistrate, binds the sinner over to a sevenfold judgment. And thus the law is not made void, but rather established. Nor is sin encouraged by what I have said, but contrariwise; for grace is exalted, which alone can subdue sin. And until it can be proved that the grace of God leads men into wickedness my brethren had better leave off shooting arrows at it; lest, while they are contracting all into a little rule, they

break through all the lines of a larger. We have some who are zealous for Moses: these are like the believing rulers, who were so zealous for the law that they thought it no crime to murder Paul. So we have some that preach up the law as the only rule, and then shoot at me for keeping it. They lay Christ for a foundation, and call in Moses to carry up the superstructure: Christ is to bear the weight, and Moses the glory. Such begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh; they first lead the sinner to cast his burden on Christ, and then load him with burdens that none can bear. They exalt the servant, dethrone the Master, and make the law the polisher of the gospel, instead of being subservient to it. I have formerly sat under some who so enforced the law upon all ranks, that I was led to think Christ had begun the work in my soul, but that I must finish it myself by keeping the law: and, as the preacher made no distinctions, he led me fairly back to the law; when I found as much enmity against God as ever, and thought I was in a more miserable state than before he meddled with me at all. And what fruits to the glory of God can spring from souls thus inflamed with rage and malice against him? If we are brought to love God, it is because we discover a love in him to us. "We love him because he first loved us." If we bring forth fruit to the glory of God, it is by virtue of a heart-felt union with the living Vine. "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no

more can ye, except ye abide in me. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing." But he that leads my soul to Moses is sure to destroy all my fruitfulness: from the Lord, not from the law, is my fruit found, Hos. xiv. 8. All the fruits that the law produces are sour grapes, untimely fruits, wild figs, and eye-service; and are produced from the fear of a criminal, and therefore justly called dead works, which must all be purged away by the blood of Christ before the soul can be saved.

It is a strait path that lies between a loose profession and a legal working: but the soul that is blessed with a divine unction from above has a sufficient leader to guide him into all truth. This I found in my own experience, when my judgment was much confused, and my understanding very much beclouded; yet I felt an inward teacher; for, if the legalist got hold of me, and I drank into his spirit, then I fell to work at mortifying my corruptions in my own strength; temptations then began to operate, sin prevailed, and I got into bondage, and found enmity to God himself spring up in my heart. And if, on the other hand, I listened to some loose professors, who cried out against my preaching up convictions by the law, and the feeling sense of pardon, peace, and love, by faith in Christ, then I lost all my peace and comfort. Thus the blessed inward teacher led me when I could not see my way; and

surely this fulfils the promise; "The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Now, that my reader may be encouraged to stick close in union with Christ Jesus, take the following considerations; the sword of justice, that was drawn at Eden's gate when God declared war with the world, was sheathed in Christ when peace was proclaimed. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered [from the stroke]: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones," Zech. xiii. 7. Thus the sword of justice was sheathed in the body and soul of Jesus Christ; and the flame of wrath, that blazed on the edge of the sword, melted the very heart of the Saviour, when he said, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels," Psalm xxii. 14. Thus the flame of wrath melted the heart of Christ, until his precious blood quenched the flame. Hence this sword is said to be bathed, that is with the blood of Christ, in heaven, and shall never come down any more upon the real believer; but only upon legal workmongers, who are under the curse of the law; and therefore the sword must come down upon them, as the people of his curse, to judgment, Isa. xxxiv. 5.

Thou seest, reader, that the sword of justice was sheathed in the Saviour; the flame of wrath was quenched in his heart; and the curse of the

law, which was the sentence due to us all for sin, was executed on Christ, he being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. Thus, justice being satisfied and judgment fully executed, both justice and judgment dwell in the body and soul of Christ, as in an habitation; and they are both agreed in him, that mercy and truth should go hand in hand to us, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne [of grace]: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," Psalm lxxxix. 15.

The law that told us to do and live, transgress and die, is now disarmed of its commanding and condemning power, as a covenant of works, and is in the heart of Christ. "Thy law is within my heart," shut up in that ark; while his righteousness is answerable to the command of the law, and his death answerable to the sentence of it. So by faith in him, as our justification and redemption, we are delivered from the commanding and condemning power of the law, as a covenant of works; and the voice is now changed from 'Do and live,' to 'Believe and live:' from 'Transgress and die,' to "He that believeth shall never die." Thus, Christian, justice, judgment, and the disarmed law, are in Christ Jesus: all judgment is committed to him; all power given him; every promise is yea and amen in him; all the treasures of grace, wisdom, and knowledge; all the fulness of the Spirit, and all the fulness of the Godhead, dwell in him bodily. And all this that God may

honour his dear Son, and magnify the riches of his grace in glory by him. The devil himself is wounded by his sword, bound by his chain, and trampled under his feet; as you read, "The Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan, the crooked serpent, even leviathan, that piercing serpent, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea," Isa. xxvii. 1. He bound him with his chain, Rev. xx. 1; he trod upon the lion and adder, and the young lion he trampled under feet, Psalm xci. 13. Therefore cleave thou to Christ, and let his whole revealed mind and will be thy rule. Moses and his legal works, Elijah and his fiery zeal, willingly withdrew, as good servants ought, from the mount while the disciples were with Jesus, Matt. xvii. 8. And, when you hear men pointing the hardened and impenitent sinner to the blood of Christ, and sending happy souls to Moses' law for a rule and a yoke, regard not every 'Lo here, and Lo there;' but go to Christ for both your rule and your yoke. If thou art a believer, go not to Sinai, but cleave to another mount, as Isaiah tells you in his vision; "And it shall come to pass in the last days [mark that], that the mountain of the Lord's house [that is Christ, compare with Dan. ii. 35;] shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will

teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Isa. ii. 2, 3. There is your rule, Christian, the law and the word; see that thou go not to Moses for a yoke; but "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage," Gal. v. 1. And take your yoke and rule from your only master and ruler, as he commands us: "Come unto me, all ye that labour [under the legal yoke], and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

When you hear men telling you that they know of no other rule than the decalogue, nor of any other assured hope of salvation than that those who endure to the end shall be saved, tell them to take their Bibles and look again. A heart-felt union kept up by faith, prayer, and watchfulness, is the only way to be fruitful. If thou sufferest thyself to be beguiled out of this, and art led to Moses, thou wilt soon get the yoke of bondage on thy neck; and when that is fixed by legal preaching thy heart will get hard; thy spirit will get narrow and contracted, 2 Cor. vi. 12; thou wilt be racked with cruel jealousy; inwardly galled at the happiness, prosperity, or success of another; and wilt then be prating about the merit of good works, while thy own soul is secretly led captive

by the devil at his will, and thy conscience accusing thee for it; but, being hardened, thou wilt not regard conscience. Thou wilt then hold the closest communion with those who are bound in the spirit of bondage with thee; and all thy conversation will be railing at those who are more happy in the Lord than thyself. Yea, thou wilt at times obscure plain truth; or even dare to pervert the word of God, in order to entangle others in thy own bondage; because their heavenly frames will gall your bitter spirits. Thus a company of Moses's advocates pull one another into the bush together. I have been through all these blind straits, and know them as well as any one that shoots in secret at me. And I know that this is the foolishness of him, that "perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord," Prov. xix. 3.

The Lord favour us with access to himself, and with the fructifying showers of special grace, that we may enjoy, and not abuse, our liberty, and be made fruitful in Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Bring thou all thy internal and external trials to the will of God in the promises, as the only rule to lay them to, and the only rule to explain them by; and keep thyself in the enjoyment of God's love in Christ Jesus. It is love that fulfils the commandments, and that will influence thy life and walk: all fruits without this root will surely wither; "Let thine heart keep my commandments." And it is the love of God in the

heart that will keep the soul from falling; "The law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide."

Thus, reader, if thou art one of the legal stamp, who seeketh rest and findeth none, I have gone as far as I can, with truth on my side, after thee; and shall have many a secret arrow shot at me for going so far. Howbeit I have not dethroned the Saviour, nor exalted the servant in the Master's place; nor have I made void the law; but have set it on a level with the rest of God's word as a rule: nor have I offered any encouragement to hardened sinners; but have established the law in all its force against them. God help you to preach up good works by your life, as the Saviour did: every miracle that he wrought proclaimed who he was; and, to shew that he sought not the glory of men, he said, "See thou tell no man of it." But good works will always preach themselves; for the more he charged them the more they spread it abroad. Let free-grace dwell on your hearts and tongues, and let your lives proclaim the fruits of the Spirit; and do not act like the workmongers; for Christ declares "they say and do not," Matt. xxiii. 3. And this appears plain enough in our present Arminian leader, who in public print has called every sound gospel minister a child of the devil; as the Pharisees, in the Lord's days, "called the master of the house Beelzebub," Matt. x. 25. So, agreeably to Christ's prediction, our present pope has con-

ferred the same name on those of his household. Thus they apply to the family of Christ what their pharisaical fathers of old applied to the Master.

May the Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort, keep us by his mighty power through faith to salvation; and enable us to give the world an account of the root in us by the fruits produced by us! Thus God shall get the glory, and we the blessing. Amen.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

T. Bensley, Printer, Bolt Court,
Fleet Street, London.

THE FINAL EXHORTATION;

BEING

A FAITHFUL OUTLINE

OF THE

LAST SERMON,

Delivered on Wednesday Evening, June 9, 1813,

AT HIS OWN CHAPEL,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE.

Taken in Short Hand.

And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation. Heb. xiii. 22.

Now these are the last words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

LONDON:

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1813.

J. Innes, Printer, Wells Street, Oxford Street, London.

Christian Reader,

I CONSIDER it a manifestation of God's goodness towards me, in that he has committed to my trust for publication, the farewel Sermon of so esteemed a Father, and I value the blessing the more, as it affords me an opportunity of putting it into thy hands. To me it came unsought for, and I can truly acknowledge the receipt of it in no other words but those of Jacob when questioned by Isaac, supposing him to be Esau, about his obtaining venison so quickly; "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me."

Doubly sweet are the kindnesses which the Lord is pleased to evidence to us, when, as Job expresses it, "My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me;" at such a time, David when reproved by Michal, Saul's daughter, uttered the following words, "It was the Lord which chose me before thy father, and before all his people, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel," 2 Sam. vi. 21; and it is elsewhere stated, "But David

waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker."

The person from whose hands I obtained it, took it down for his own pleasure, and hearing the Sermon was much sought after, at the advice of a friend called upon me. I have submitted it to the perusal and judgment of a few friends, and at their request I give it forth to the church of God. Such, Reader, are the means by which I have been enabled to present it to you, humbly hoping that the blessing of God may attend it.

E. HUNTINGTON.

High Street,
August 1, 1813.

THE

FINAL EXHORTATION.

REVELATIONS iii. 3.

"*Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*"

IT ever hath been the opinion of all good and learned men, that those things which our blessed Lord revealed unto his servant John, is prophetic of his church down to the end of time, and was revealed to him when through the persecution and cruelty of a Roman Emperor he was banished into the Isle of Patmos, which is one of the Islands of the Sporades, in the Egean Sea. Notwithstanding this great condescension of our Lord to his servant John and to his church, yet some have been blind enough to pour their contempt on this book, and to condemn it together with the Epistle of Jude as not canonical, which plainly shews that such men were not enlightened by the Holy Spirit to look into those mysteries.

But some learned Divines have divided this book into two parts, and the first part they have called Church prophesy, which indeed is evident from the third verse of the first chapter which tells us that he is blessed that reads, and they are blessed that hear the words of this prophesy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand. The second part they have called Book prophesy, because in the tenth chapter of this Revelation, the little book is in the hand of Christ; "And I saw," says John, "another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open;" called little, because its contents are small, yet they are very weighty, and are about to be fulfilled. This little book is not as many have supposed it to be, a covenant of grace or a covenant of works; but it is in allusion to the kings of Israel, who, on the day in which they were by the High Priest anointed to the kingly office, received from the hand of the Priest a book of the law written, of which they were to be in continual possession, and in which they were daily to meditate. Thus did Jehoiada the Priest, when he brought forth young Jehoash before the captains; he put the crown upon him, and he

gave him the testimony, and they made him king, and anointed him, 2 Kings ii. 12; and this little book being in the hand of Christ signified his kingly office.—Thus the first part which is revealed is called Church prophesy, and the succeeding part is called Book prophesy.

The seven churches here named do distinctly represent the different periods of the church of God down to the end of time. Now for the better understanding this book of the Revelations, observe the blowing of the trumpets, and what followed in consequence thereof, are the different occurrences which have and are to take place in the church of God, and likewise in the world under the different periods of the church of God. Sure I am that it is a prophesy from God, and hath respected his church in every age since it was first revealed to John, who styles himself, her brother and companion in tribulation, Rev. i. 9; and I will give you my reason, because first he was commanded to write to the seven churches in Asia, when at the same time all the seven were not founded; now this proves it prophetic, for it speaks of that which then had never had a being.

Secondly, Babylon, Corinth and Phillippi were great and flourishing churches as well as others, but these are taken no notice of, neither was their mother church in Judea; which also proves it to

be prophetic: and that we should know something of the will of God towards his servants, it hath pleased him to give some men enlightened understandings.

Thirdly, John in the first place was ordered to write unto the angel of the church of Ephesus; "These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand," this means his ministering servants; "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," by this is meant the churches: "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil; and hast tried them that say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Now all this was fulfilled in Paul our great apostle, who tells us that he tried some and found them false apostles, deceitful workers; transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; that he had fought a good fight and kept the faith, and that as an apostle he had laboured more abundantly than they all. "Yet not I," he adds, "but the grace of God that was with me." And nothing can be plainer than this, that the message to the church of Thyatira is prophetic of the whore of Babylon, the see of Rome, whose damnable errors and

heresies had overspread the world with darkness and superstition. It was to this church the promise was made to give him the morning star, the dawnings and first bright rays of truth, at a time when the delusions of the Pope and Mahomet rode in triumph.

In the ninth chapter of this book you have a very particular account of the terrific appearance of the Turks, and of the power which these delusions have over the souls of men; and of the loosing of the four angels in the great river Euphrates, which were four great generals, who made their appearance in the world at two different times, and enforced their religion on mankind by the sword. One of the last two was drowned in crossing a river; and although some parts had not forced on them the doctrines of the bottomless pit, yet these, they repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood. As long as the Turks continue in possession, and in worship of the laws of the Alcoran, and submit themselves to those delusions which had their rise in hell—so long shall we be under the Sardisian state, for this is certainly the state or period of the church of God under which we live, which I believe will shortly be closed, and that of Philadelphia

which is the next, will be ushered in with the universal spread of the gospel.

Luther was the star promised at the conclusion of the church of Thyatira, for said Christ to that church, "I will give him the morning star;" and this morning star was only a prelude of much light after him. The church of Sardis commenced at the time of Luther and Calvin, and others in Germany, and about the time of Wickliffe in England; and Luther admitted all as members of the church, if they opposed the Pope and popery; but none ought to be admitted into the church of God but those who are of the household of faith, true Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Doctor Owen and Doctor Goodwin indeed endeavoured to describe and settle a true church, which is called measuring the temple of God. "And there was given me," said John, "a reed like unto a rod; the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein;" and at this work Dr. Owen began by admitting no others into communion but those who could give a reason of their hope, and an account of their interest in Christ.

Now there are three things which Christ finds fault with us for, that is with the church of Sardis, for we live under the period of this church, First,

for making a great profession of religion, when at the same time we are in possession of nothing more than a name to live: take notice of his own words, "These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead." How hateful and disgusting is it to hear persons talk about religion perhaps for the hour together, and at the same time strangers, as it respects their own souls, to the new birth and regeneration by the Holy Spirit of God.

The second thing he finds fault with us for, is, because they have not strengthened the things that remain, that are ready to die. How many are there, and numbers I have known myself, who instead of doing as the apostle Paul tells them, that is, to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, have by the very preachers they have attended, been kept in legal bondage; and when they have gone from one place to another to find food for their souls, they have not found it; and how can it be otherwise? for such men as they hear, being only ministers of the letter and not of the Spirit, such can never benefit the family of God; for the letter killeth, but it is the Spirit that giveth life, 2 Cor. iii. 6. But what saith the prophet Hosea of such men? "Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give? give

them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts," Hos. ix. 14.

The third thing they are found fault with, is, "I have not," says Christ, "found thy works perfect before God;" and doth it not agree with the appearance of things in the present day? How many are taken in to join churches who are nothing more than mere professors, without any regard to the possession of pure religion, none of their graces being true nor genuine, and that, in the sight of God and scriptural account, is no grace at all which is not true grace. In the second chapter and at the second verse of this book, the Lord Jesus Christ said of some, that he knew their works, and their labour, and their patience, and how they could not bear them that were evil, and hast tried some that say they are apostles and are not, but hast found them liars; here he owns their graces to be genuine: and the apostle Paul, as I stated to you before, is the very man here spoken of; and he tells you of them in his epistles, for it was under the period of this church he was called.

The next state after this is the Philadelphian church, when Jew and Gentile shall be brought in, and the universal shout shall go forth, exclaiming, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his

Christ." "Behold," saith our Lord, "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it," which evidently sheweth the wonderful spread of the gospel under this state; and by what follows you may clearly perceive the return of the Jews to the pure worship of God. "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of satan which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie, behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee;" that is, they shall be converted to Christ by the instrumentality of gentile ministers; and when they are made sensible of their revolt, then they shall know that I have loved thee—that is the gentile church, through whose mercy they shall obtain mercy; "As it is written, There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins."

The account of them therefore which we read from the mouth of the Lord, saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," Matt. xxiii. 38, 39; with what Paul declared of them, "For wrath is come upon them to the uttermost," 1 Thess. ii. 16; and what we daily know of their hardness, blindness, and

impenitency, together with what is here recorded of their return, all these things plainly shew that this is prophetic of the church of God in that state which succeeds the present.

The Last Church is that of Laodicea, which he promises to spue out of his mouth, because after this he will have no more a church upon earth in its present militant state; and for this reason styles himself what he doth to no other church, The Amen. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast." First, I will treat of those great truths which are essential to your eternal salvation; which things you have received and heard, and which I would persuade you to hold fast.

The first is, the doctrine of the glorious and incomprehensible Trinity, and Trinity in unity, which the apostle Paul calls the mystery; first, of God the Holy Spirit; secondly, of God the Father; and thirdly, of God the Son. "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," Col. ii. 2. If you are without the love of God, what are you but a sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal, a fit name for all who are void of charity or the love of God? but

says God to his people, " I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee," to Christ; and therefore, says the Saviour, " No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John vi. 44; " And him that" is thus drawn and " cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." What are we without the Lord Jesus Christ but a mass of pollution and misery, and must of course be destitute of pardon through his blood, righteousness to cover us, and eternal life which is his gift. And without the Spirit of God to teach and comfort us, we are ignorant of the way of salvation, and consequently of the way of true peace; and nothing but destruction and misery are the ways of all such as are ignorant of these things.

If you are not well settled and grounded in these truths, which our Lord Jesus Christ preached to his followers when he was about to leave them, after his resurrection, saying, " Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" then every heretic and enemy to this doctrine that you hear, will so perplex and disturb you that you will never know peace. Besides, the scriptures afford much consolation to those who have experience of these truths;

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one;" observe, "and these three are one." "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. And if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater," 1 John v. 7—9; then what daring presumption to deny the words of truth, which hath a witness in the souls of men. And, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost."

The second is, the divinity and eternal godhead of Christ Jesus, our blessed Saviour, who hath declared, "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins," John viii. 24; the word, he, is not in the original. But when he saith, "If ye believe not that I am," the Saviour refers to the same language which he spake to Moses from the bush, "Thus shalt thou say unto them," says the Saviour, "I AM hath sent me unto you," Exod. iii. 14; the self-existing, self-dependent Jehovah, equal with the Father, for, "I and my Father are one," in authority, majesty, and power; therefore he said to the Jews, "If you believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins." And if Christ is not that God that made the heavens and the earth, he is no more than a mere

creature, and hath not eternal life in himself, nor eternal life to give to others; but blessed be God who hath persuaded us that he is Lord and Creator of all things, both in heaven and in earth, and, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him," Psal. ii. 12. There are many that treat this doctrine of the blessed Trinity, and the work of the Spirit on the souls of men as contemptible; but such openly manifest their folly, for they speak of these things as if they knew more of God than he doth of himself. "Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast."

The third thing you are to hold fast is, God's election before time, and choice of his sheep before the beginning of this world, and of this the apostle Paul assures us, when he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Ephes. i. 3, 4, 5, 11. And Peter exhorts you to give diligence to make your calling

and election sure, 2 Pet. i. 10. Be diligent in waiting for him and upon him in the ways of his appointment, for, "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors," Prov. viii. 34; therefore give diligence to make your calling and election sure, and when this is done you will be settled, strengthened, and established.

This is a doctrine which the Saviour himself when on earth preached, for in his first sermon at Nazareth he preached up election or God's discriminating grace to some and his rejection of others; "I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land: But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet: and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian;" and when the jews heard this account of unmerited grace and favour, they were filled with indignation, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong, in order to break his neck, for they hated such doctrine as this, Luke iv. 25—29.

At another time he told them plainly, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep; then they took up stones to stone him," John x. 26—30. As it is now, so it was then. Men cannot bear to hear of God's eternal election and choice of his sheep, although he declared to some, saying, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," John xv. 16. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast."

The fourth thing you are to hold fast, is, redemption by Christ Jesus in time, from among men; "The Son of Man came," saith our Saviour, "to give his life a ransom for many," Mark x. 45. "I came that my sheep might have life," John x. 10. "I lay down my life for my sheep," and not for goats, for these he will separate from his sheep, Matt. xxv. 32; not for dogs, "For without are dogs," Rev. xxii. 15; not for wolves, not for a generation of vipers—but, "I lay down my life for my sheep." In the book of the Revelations we read of some before the throne of God, who were redeemed from among men, Rev. xiv. 4; and Jacob, when he was come to the end of

his race, acknowledges this, "The God that fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads," Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. "For I know," says Job, "that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," Job xix. 25. And David saith, "The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate," Psal. xxxiv. 22; and to be redeemed from a vain conversation, and from among men is the experience of all good men: "Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast."

The fifth particular that you are to hold fast, and which is essential to salvation is, that we are accepted and justified only by faith in the righteousness of Christ Jesus, as it is written; "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall be called trees of righteousness, the right hand planting of God, that he might be glorified:" for, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and in him they shall all glory," Isai. xlv. 25. Unto the prophet Habakkuk the Lord declared that, "The just shall live by his faith;" which the Saviour confirms and says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

These are truths which Luther and Calvin who were taught and sent by God laid great stress upon, and if you read the writings of Luther you may see how bravely he defended these doctrines against the errors of the beast, and proved their works of supererogation, and righteousness by their own merits, to be a delusion and folly. Paul most solemnly declares that whosoever of you seekest to be justified by the law, is fallen from grace, Gal. v. 4; that is, he is fallen from the doctrine of salvation by faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ, and Christ is become to such of none effect, his salvation will profit you nothing, what can be more plain? Thus the scriptures confirm this doctrine, Luther and Calvin confirm it, the articles of the church of England confirm it and say, 'That justification by faith is a most wholesome doctrine,' so doth the common prayer book, and so hath every good minister whom God hath sent since the Reformation; and numbers of them have sealed the truth of it with their blood. "Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast."

The sixth thing that you are to hold fast is, that of regeneration. All meekness and contrition, and fitness for heaven is, by the operation of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men; and to confirm

this our blessed Saviour hath declared that without being born again, or being regenerated by the Holy Spirit, you cannot enter into the kingdom of grace here in this life; nor shall you ever enter into the kingdom of glory which is above. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Lord," Titus iii. *5, 6.* In regeneration the Spirit diffuses his graces through every faculty of the soul, which makes it become a willing subject in the day of God's power. This doctrine was taught by Luther and Calvin, and their fellow-helpers; and by the church of England which prays that God would endue his servants with the healthful Spirit of his grace, that he would make all his chosen people joyful, and that he would cleanse the thoughts of our heart by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Thus these very important doctrines were taught and enforced by the Saviour, by his apostles and followers, in the scripture, in the church of England, by Luther and Calvin, and have been by hundreds who have sealed it with their blood; and that person who is an enemy to these doctrines and denies them is a rebel to his God, a disgrace to the Saviour of sinners, a scandal to

the church of Christ, a scandal to the church of England, and a scandal to a congregation of sound Dissenters.

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast," a trinity of Persons in one Jehovah; "There are three that bear record in heaven." The godhead and divinity of Jesus Christ; 'Very God and very man:' "In whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily." God's free choice in our election; "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Redemption by Christ in time from among men, "He came into this world to save sinners." That we are justified and accepted before God, through faith in our Redeemer's righteousness; "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." That regeneration and every other grace is from the operation of the Holy Ghost; "It is the Spirit that quickeneth."

The Arminians talk much about bringing souls to God, and of building up the church of God; but they always take great care first to remove the foundation that God hath laid, and then to lay a foundation of their own before they begin to build; and there are others who at their

first setting out bid fair and mean well, who after a time shew that these things never reached the heart, and they swerve from the truth. I know one now living who in Mr. Toplady's time was very strenuous for these doctrines, and who professed himself his greatest friend for the truth's sake, but is now as blind as a bat, and as rotten as any Arminian. How few are there in our day but what turn away to this kind of religion, and not one of them all have the religion of Christ set forth in so clear a manner, nor with that light as we have had it amongst us: "But even unto this day the vail is upon their heart," 2 Cor. iii. 15; and it is the Lord the Spirit that giveth us that light, and, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," 2 Cor. iii. 17.

Then, "Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast," never give them up, let no man wrest them from you—I do not mean in the head only, but that it may descend into the heart and conscience, for if you only have them in the head, a form of sound words without the power, some arch heretic may be too powerful for you and wrest it from your understanding; but if you have for an helmet the hope of salvation, 1 Thess. v. 8.; it will defend the judgment as well as preserve the truth in your heart and conscience, for no one can rob nor

deprive you of what you both know and feel to be true. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

II. To watch is, first against sin, that it doth not get the upper hand of us and prove our master; and never to forget the fountain of Christ's blood which is always open for sin and uncleanness: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," Zech. xiii. 1; and to this make application by pleading the promises of God at a throne of grace, and remember he hath said, "I will subdue thine iniquities." Again, "If ye through the Spirit," mind that it is not in your own strength, but it is through the Spirit, "do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," Rom. viii. 13. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. These things," saith John, "write I unto you, that ye sin not," but yet after all, if any man is overcome by his inbred corruptions, or by temptations, and he doth sin, then says John, "We have an advocate

with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" then fly to him as such, that you may experience him so to be, for this is the privilege of the saint; and all the time this is not the case, you are living beneath your privileges. "He is the propitiation for our sins;" the propitiatory sacrifice whose blood cleanseth us from all sin; therefore, John says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," 1 John ii. 2.

The second is, to watch against errors and heresy. Take heed what you hear, and "Cease from the instruction that causeth to err from the right way of understanding." Truth should be your shield and buckler; "Buy the truth and sell it not," Prov. xxiii. 23. Truth shall be established in the very heavens, Psal. lxxxix. 2; for they that keep the truth shall enter into heaven, "Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in," Isai. xxvi. 2. But they that receive not the truth in the love of it, but on the contrary love and make a lie, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death, Rev. xxi. 8; therefore watch against error, knowing how many errors are in the world. The Arminian spreads his error of free-will, sinless perfection, lifting up his voice against the truth of God's sovereign power, and the imputation of Christ's

righteousness to perishing sinners; the Arian, the Socinian, and the Sabellian, are unwearied in proclaiming theirs also, therefore you see how necessary it is to watch against these things, not to lean unto your own understanding, Prov. iii. 5; but to commit yourselves unto God as unto a faithful keeper, therefore, "Cease from the instruction that causeth thee to err."

The third is, to watch the hand of God in his providence towards you, and if you do you will daily find matter enough to admire the hand and handyworks of the Lord; "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another," Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. Christ putteth forth his own sheep, and he goeth before them, and they follow him, John x. 4; but if you leave the shepherd to go after the riches of this world, in the end you will gain nothing by trading; and if like Demas you forsake the shepherd for the love of this present evil world, remember, it may be a long time before you may find the hand of the shepherd upon thee again. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

The fourth thing that is meant by watching, is, to watch unto prayer, and observe if there is that earnest desire as there was in the church when she

said, "Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord," Psal. cxxiii. 2. And first let thy request be made known unto God, as the apostle observes, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God," Phill. iv. 6; and as David says "Wait upon the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, upon the Lord," Psal. xxvii. 14. Secondly, when you have done this, like Hannah, leave your burden with him; thirdly, look up to the Lord for a fulfilment of his promise; and fourthly, when prayer is heard and answered, never forget to return a thank-offering, and say with David, "Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications. The Lord is my strength, and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth, and with my song will I praise him," and this is, because he hath heard my prayer, Psal. xxviii. 6, 7. Then, "Call upon me," says God, "in the day of trouble, and" although it should be a thousand times, "I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," Psal. l. 15.

The fifth is, to watch your own frames and feelings, and observe whether matters are now

with you as they formerly were; whether you experience a growth in grace, an increase of light in the mind, peace in the conscience, and love in the affections; and daily balance accounts between you and your God, as he hath promised there shall be a growing up into Christ and that in all things. Seek that your faith and hope may yet more and more abound; "Abide in me," says the Saviour, "as the branch abideth in the vine, and then ye shall bring forth much fruit; but without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 4, 5. This he hath plainly said, therefore observe if your path shineth brighter and brighter, whether you get more lively in the way of religion, or whether you get darker, dead, and lifeless: "For the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. Do not always be living on your former experience, but look out for present comforts and consolations of the Holy Spirit. "Be ye followers of me." "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," says Paul; "but this I follow after, that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in

Christ Jesus," Phill. iii. 12—14. Then "Be ye not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises," Heb. vi. 12. And for my part I have always been determined to keep back nothing from you, but to declare unto you the whole counsel of God, therefore I am clear from the blood of you all; then "Remember how you have received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch I will come on thee as a thief; and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

By coming as a thief our Lord doth not mean to destroy, but to chastise you for your backslidings from God. You are not to understand it to mean that he will come upon us to rob, and kill, and destroy at midnight, or as opportunity serves, but in a way of rebuke and chastisement to his people; that he will come suddenly upon them, and at a time that they did not expect him, they being off their watch-tower; as he will also on the wise and foolish virgins who fall into carnal security and insensibility; "For while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a great cry made; Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him," Matt. xxv. 5, 6. Thus he will come very suddenly, when your backs call for stripes, and

chasten you; but remember, he hath promised to keep his people in the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them, Rev. iii. 10. "Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If thou dost not watch I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." I add no more.

THE END.

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